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THE FERNLEY LECTURE OF 1885.

METHODISM

IN

THE LIGHT OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

BEING THE

FIFTEENTH FERNLEY LECTURE;

DELIVERED AT

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, AUGUST 3, 1885.

BY

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PREFACE.

THE following lecture, in its printed form, has attained dimensions somewhat out of proportion with its character as a single address. The nature of the subject and of the questions arising out of it has seemed to make it desirable that not only the results of the inquiry should be furnished to the readers, but also a fair view of the process by which these results have been obtained.

For convenience of arrangement and reference the lecture is divided into chapters. Extracts from works in other languages which appear in the text are generally given in English, and this rule has been largely followed in the notes. In the case of the 'Fathers,' free use has been made, for this purpose, of the translations of the *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, published by Messrs. Clark, Edinburgh.

Obligations to other authorities for information and suggestions on the various points, which have come under consideration, are indicated by the references in the notes, and by the index at the end of the volume.

It was not to be avoided that the discussion of such topics as those which occupy this essay should assume a controversial aspect. It is hoped, however, that this has

not precluded the exercise of due courtesy to writers who belong to other schools of thought and training. It has not been intended that the defence of one branch of the Church should prevent the due recognition of the merits of the other branches. If no one discerns in this apology for one section of Christianity some argument for the religion of the Saviour, in its broadest significance, the true aim of its composition will only have been too effectually disguised.

It ought to be said that, although the 'Fernley Lecture' is always given in connection with the assembling of the Wesleyan Conference, the lecturer alone is responsible for the views which it contains. It is a disadvantage peculiar to a publication of comparatively narrow limits that subjects, which, if touched at all, deserve an ample exposition, can only receive a cursory observation. These limits have, certainly, been more compatible with the time and opportunities at the disposal of one engaged in the manifold duties of the pastorate, than such as would have permitted an adequate investigation. Possibly, this sketch, with all its imperfections, may, in some slight degree, help the delineation of the ecclesiastical position of the Methodist community, and of its true relation to the primitive and to the universal Church of Christ.

The Manse, Green Lanes, London,
August 25, 1885.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTORY	9
II.	THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT	18
III.	THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH	46
IV.	APOSTOLICITY	66
V.	UNITY AND CATHOLICITY	102
VI.	UNITY AND CATHOLICITY	120
VII.	ORDER AND PROGRESS	141
	INDEX TO AUTHORS AND SUBJECTS	163

METHODISM IN THE LIGHT OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

'To imbibe into the intellect the Catholic Church as a fact is either to be a Catholic or an infidel.'[1]

'When you talk of the novelty of our religion, does your own not come into your thoughts?'[2]

It has not been by design that the subject of this lecture is so closely allied to that of the 'Fernley Lecture' delivered at the Newcastle Conference twelve years ago by the learned Connexional editor. Under the title of 'The Holy Catholic Church, The Communion of Saints,' we were presented with an exposition of the intrinsic nature of the Church itself as a living and organic unity, with a special exhibition of *Fellowship* as the product and token of its life. The enquiry we now propose is, How Methodism—its history, its creed, its forms, its aim—appears in the light of the primitive Church? Incidentally, we may have to refer to some of the points of scriptural exegesis and of historical enquiry, upon which Dr. Gregory discoursed—as many here will remember—with such evident 'research, originality, vigour, and adaptation to our own time.'[3] But the abiding interest of the subject must be our apology, if any is needed, for this attempt to

[1] *The Difficulties of Anglicanism*, by J. H. Newman, i., 193.
[2] Lactantius, ii., 71. [3] *Min. of Conf.*, 1873, p. 259.

compare the facts and phenomena of 'Methodism' with the facts and phenomena of primitive Christianity. We shall do this with the hope of learning something upon the question, whether this great development of the Christian profession may be regarded as a legitimate, healthful, and benign diffusion of the name and spirit of the religion instituted by Christ and published by apostles; or, whether it is an unauthorized, corrupt, and mischievous imitation of it. We cannot shrink from such an enquiry because it may bring us face to face with an ideal which we have too seldom approached, or because it may force upon us questions which it would be convenient to evade. We may reasonably believe that it will supply us with fresh reasons for the adoration of that 'manifold wisdom of God,'[1] which is especially exhibited in the Church. And it is our privilege to pray that the 'Spirit of Truth,' promised and given through Christ, may enable us to learn from such an enquiry all that we ought at this time to receive and know.

The opportunities for such an examination were never more favourable than now. For many ages the history of the planting of Christianity was hidden under deep accumulations of tradition, much of which had no authority. All records and sources of the history were for many centuries under the hands of men bound to a more or less false theory of their meaning. The memory of the pristine Church became a half-mythical picture of paradisiacal unity and perfection.[2] Every saint was supposed to bear not only a pentecostal halo round his

[1] Eph. iii. 10: ἡ πολυποίκιλος σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ, 'manifold ways and measures of God' (Meyer). Commentators have often forgotten that the Apostle spoke of the *variety* which the Church embraced in its *unity*.

[2] 'Criticism has put a lens to our eyes and disclosed to us on . . .

brow, but the secret of pentecostal wisdom and authority in his breast.[1] Peter and Paul, John and Apollos, Ignatius and Tertullian, were credited with the same opinions. Many Church writers seemed to teach no less than that the apostles transferred their gifts of inspiration and authority to presbyters and bishops, who ensured to their successors the same benefits. We know how this view culminated in the proclamation of 'infallibility' in 1870. The Church, the creed, the worship, were nothing if not 'apostolical.' By 'apostolical' was meant historical connection with the apostles by successive ordination and appointment. It was on this account that, from the second century, there was such an enormous succession of apocryphal and forged writings. 'Gospels' of Peter and Thomas and Nicodemus; 'Acts' of Philip and Barnabas; 'Canons' and 'Constitutions' and 'Teachings' of Apostles abounded. The name of Clement, because of his supposed connection with the See of Rome, presented an overpowering fascination to the fabricator of 'pious frauds.' Genuine writings of the apostles have been subjected to needless

primitive Christianity rents and craters undreamt of in our simplicity.' (S. B. Gould, *Lost Gospels*, Pref. p. vii.) Cf. Bagehot's *Lit. Studies*, ii., 47.

[1] 'It was a pleasing dream which represented the primitive Church as a society of angels; and it is not without a struggle that we bring ourselves to open our eyes and behold the reality.' (Conybeare and Howson, *Life and Epp. of St. Paul*, chap. xiv.)

Wesley replied to Middleton (*Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers of the Early Church*, 1749), when he reflected upon the credibility of the Fathers, tracing his opinions to Daillé (*Right Use of the Fathers*). Dr. Middleton's intention was to refute the Papists who pleaded miracles in proof of their system. Middleton urged that the apostolic Fathers say much of extraordinary gifts, but not of miracles; and he thought that Irenæus and Tertullian would not have made so many mistakes in the interpretation of Scripture if the apostolic powers had been continued. But Middleton had drunk too deeply of the sceptical spirit of his time. He proved too much.

suspicion, because it has been impossible to deny these fraudulent practices in the earliest Christian times. The revolt of modern criticism against the principle of authority has not been without justification, though it may have led sometimes to extreme conclusions. But we need not dread exploration, which only reveals more clearly the veritable work of the primitive founders. Behind occidental plaster and oriental colouring there are perpetually appearing the indubitable tokens of apostolic hands. And, amidst so much falsification, the preservation of the writings of the New Testament must be held to be of the singular and merciful Providence of God.

But the study of the first age of the Church is still embarrassed by the lack of documents.[1] The only compositions of authority, which have come down to us from the thirty years after the death of Peter and Paul, are the writings of St. John. Uncertain and fragmentary epistles attributed to Clement and Ignatius[2]—if we except the newly-found 'Teaching of the Twelve Apostles'[3]—are all that remain from the first third of the second century. The early Christians were a poor, persecuted, fugitive community, whose gospel was chiefly oral.[4] They treasured the word

[1] Dr. Westcott (*Canon*, p. 237) says of the first century after Christ, 'It is the dark age of Church history. In the absence of any trustworthy guidance, every step requires to be secured by painful investigation.'

[2] The Second Epistle of Clement is now generally considered to be not genuine; it is scarcely likely that the First has escaped the perils of transmission. It is doubtful who this Clement was. See Smith's *Dict. of Christ. Biog.*, i., 554, etc. On this Epistle and the Epistles of Ignatius, see *infra*.

[3] See *infra*. Also Schaff, *Hist. of the Ch.* (100–325), p. 640.

[4] The persecution under Diocletian in Asia (A.D. 304) was specially directed against the Scriptures and Christian writings. Eusebius, *H. E.*, viii., 2, mentions particularly 'the inspired and sacred Scriptures' (αἱ δὲ ἔνθεοι καὶ ἱεραὶ γραφαὶ κατὰ μέσας ἀγορὰς πυρὶ παραδιδόμεναι). The ministers were

in their hearts rather than in books. Literature can only prosper among people who have leisure, liberty, and wealth; and these were denied to the first believers. We cannot be surprised, therefore, that there was no Church history until the time of Eusebius.[1] Traditions were valuable according to their suitability for edification, or for the vindication of dominant views. Down to the times of the Reformation there was scarcely any criticism. The chroniclers, like Socrates (A.D. 440) or Nicephorus (A.D. 1327), repeated what had been said before. Beda, the ecclesiastical historian of Britain, who lived and died at Jarrow (A.D. 673–735), may be taken as a fair specimen of the Church historian of the earlier and purer portion of the Middle Ages. He wrote many commentaries on Scripture, and taught theology and general science to a crowd of pupils who made Jarrow a university town in that day. But Augustine was his master in theology and ecclesiasticism. His learning prevented him from being so credulous as some of his contemporaries; yet it is seldom that a story is too marvellous for

tortured to compel the surrender of these writings. There is no reference to the destruction of writings in the earlier persecutions under Trajan and Domitian, though it doubtless occurred too frequently during the first three centuries. The poverty of the Christians would prevent the abundant increase of copies. When Constantine became Christian, all this was changed. Arnobius (*Adv. Gent.*, iv.) asks (A.D. 305), 'Why indeed have our writings deserved to be given to the flames?'

[1] A.D. 324. He says: 'As the first of them that have entered upon this subject, we are entering upon a trackless and unbeaten path.' Wesley (*Journal*, Nov. 19, 1741) speaks slightingly of Eusebius: 'So weak, credulous,' thoroughly injudicious a writer have I seldom found.' An Oxford dignitary has more recently said: 'Eusebius, father of ecclesiastical history, is like Herodotus . . . Real historical investigation is unknown to him.' (Jowett, on *Epp. of St. Paul*, i., 420.) A more favourable, and perhaps just, estimate may be found in Dr. Lightfoot's article in Smith and Wace's *Dict. of Christ. Biog.*

him.[1] In his time, moreover, the primitive light had become so much obscured that it was almost impossible for a Christian not to be a Romanist.

But at the Reformation criticism began its work. That work still goes on; and already every party in the Church —Romish or Protestant, Ultramontane or Gallican, Jesuit, Benedictine or Franciscan, Episcopalian, Presbyterian or Congregational, has found it necessary to enquire into the beginnings of Christianity—to explore the *fons et origo* of every doctrine, institution, and custom bearing the Christian name. Investigation has been assisted by the errors of forerunners. About fifty years ago there arose in Germany a school of critics, called, from the town in which its principal representatives resided, the 'Tübingen school,' who professed to have obtained fresh light on the origins of Christianity. Few persons, even among those who agree with their philosophic method and principles of interpretation, would now accept their scheme of the history. But their attacks upon the genuineness of the books of the New Testament, and upon the received outline of the genesis of the Church, have changed the face of sacred criticism. The advance of Christian scholarship in our own country and in America is largely due to the demonstration of its necessity and importance which they have given. The application of their naturalism to the current of early tradition has precipitated obscuring elements, and has exhibited its depth and contents more clearly than ever.

[1] In *Hist. Eccl.*, cap. 31, 32, he relates the wonderful story of the preservation of St. Cuthbert's body eleven years after death, and of the cures of palsy and distemper at his tomb at Durham. Beda also rests in the same cathedral, where every visitor is shown the inscription, *Hac sunt in fossa, Bedæ venerabilis ossa.*

Other schemes, which have been prematurely erected upon the basis of the new information, have also had their day. Strauss and Renan have made their appeal to the enlightened judgment of mankind, in vain. The Christian world refuses to accept these expositions of the life of Christ, of His miracles, of the resurrection. But the refutation of such criticism, and of that of Baur and Schwegler, of Volkmar, Keim, Hausrath and Pfleiderer, has demanded a fresh examination of the original documents. An impulse from another quarter, but in the same direction, has fallen upon the evangelical section of the Church. The ambition—inherited from previous generations of English churchmen—to establish Christian unity on so-called 'tradition' and episcopal succession, without subjection to Rome,—embodied in the system known as Tractarianism, Puseyism or Anglicanism, has been proved, by innumerable perversions and other indubitable signs, to have failed. We do not question the sincerity of writers like Pusey and Liddon, who think their method of meeting the claims of Rome the best.[1] They profess to set 'catholicity' against 'catholicity,' as indeed does every school of Protestant opinion.

Out of this concentration of enquiry has come encouraging elucidation of many dark portions of this interesting story. In so great a fire of criticism, which so many have conspired to kindle, no marvel if much 'wood, hay and stubble,' have been destroyed, and the builders thereof have suffered loss.[2]

[1] See the unhesitating exposure of Popish errors in Littledale's *Plain Reasons against joining the Church of Rome* (S. P. C. K.), Bennett's *Broken Unity*, Curteis's *Bampton Lectures*, etc. The active hostility of the Puseyites against Romanism is sometimes overlooked.

[2] 'Humanæ constitutiunculæ de cultu, de victu, de frigidis ceremoniis.'—Erasmus (in Meyer on 1 Cor. iii. 12, 13).

But the 'gold, silver and precious stones,' which belonged to the original and inalienable endowment of the Church, have been made more secure. Further, we need scarcely add that the spirit of modern science, including that of history, which is impatient of traditional authority—refusing to listen to uncertain fables, however venerable, and demanding verification for every doctrine, has been favourable rather than otherwise to the faith which rests upon the simple stories of the New Testament—on the unquestioned facts of the lives of Jesus Christ and His apostles. Fresh interest has also gathered round such questions from the unprecedented advances towards the unification of mankind made in our times. Wonderful inventions have rendered possible a rapid and universal interchange of ideas. The world thrills every day with the consciousness of the same facts. Men are not now being trained in secluded families, in separate spheres, but all are accessible to the same influences, and 'one event happeneth to them all.' At the same time, evidence of the native unity of the race has been supplied, together with a providential preparation for its realization, in the marvellous victories of the gospel in every part of the world. The miracles of Pentecost may almost be said to have been so repeated as to make a Jerusalem of the whole earth. In every nation under heaven men have heard the gospel speaking with power in their own tongue. This accelerated development of the idea and reality of the oneness of humanity has given fresh interest to the question, What is to be the religion of the assembling nations, and what shall be the form of it?

We venture to say that these circumstances enhance the

value of the intense simplicity of primitive Christianity. It reveals itself more and more as a system of divinest breadth and grandeur, independent of national distinctions, of continental or insular limitations, free from dependence on the patronage of human hierarchies or the mechanism of human rites. Living power, and not prescription or privilege, is its witness. It addresses itself anew to every generation, that each may have a Pentecost of its own, attended by its own apostolic gifts and institutions. The universal dominion for which the Cæsars pined, but which belongs only to the 'King of the Jews,' was never nearer than in these days of colonization, steamships and telegraphs. But it becomes clearer that this world-church can only be built up out of that which is common to man. A divine salvation, working out effectual redemption, and making provision for universal ignorance, sin and misery, embodied in its own selected and free organization, can alone be the material and the form of it. It cannot be framed out of the mouldering timbers of decaying church-forms. It will be too vast to be confined within the walls of any temple 'made with hands.' Humanity, not the Church of Rome, nor yet that of Jerusalem, is to be its measure. Its circumference, comprehending all periods and people, will include all the ransomed in its 'communion of saints.' It is in the light of this imposing and growing conception of sanctified humanity that we are called upon to compare the movement dating from the man who said, 'The world is my parish,' with the ideal placed, nineteen centuries ago, before the minds of those who were commanded to 'go and preach the gospel to the whole creation.'

CHAPTER II.

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT.

'Ubi enim ecclesia, ibi et Spiritus Dei; et ubi Spiritus Dei, illic ecclesia et omnis gratia.'[1]

'There are crises in the history of Christianity when new forms are given to the outward organization, and He makes those a people that were not a people.'[2]

'In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them.'[3]

THE course of events out of which Christianity arose was entirely unexpected and unpremeditated by men. Though a Messiah had been long looked for among the Jews,[4] who could have foreseen or predicted that He would appear among rustics and fishermen in Galilee rather than among priests and politicians in Judea? Who could have anticipated the subversion of Roman paganism, the abolition of slavery, ideas of universal enlightenment and of a brotherhood of humanity, from the doctrine of a crucified man, working in the souls of a few 'unlearned and ignorant men;'[5] or in the bosom of a rabbinical

[1] Irenæus. [2] Dr. Pope. [3] 'Rules of Society.'

[4] See Dr. Edersheim's *Prophecy and History in relation to the Messiah*, 1885.

[5] The R. V. retains this phrase for ἄνθρωποι ἀγράμματοι καὶ ἰδιῶται. It is, more literally, 'unlettered and self-taught.' The priests observed that

student, whose zeal for the established religion of his people made him 'a persecutor and injurious'? Neither Pilate, nor Herod, nor Caiaphas knew that in a few centuries the pretended successors of 'the pilot of the Galilean lake' would displace the Cæsars, or that they would set up a priesthood claiming powers to which the sons of Aaron never aspired. Much less did they know that God had opened in Jerusalem in their day that 'fountain for sin and uncleanness' to which all nations might come that they might 'wash and be clean.' 'The stone which the builders refused is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.'

St. Paul reminds us that 'the things which eye saw not and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man . . . God hath prepared for them that love Him.'[1] The 'constitution and course of nature' are, without doubt, framed within lines of invariable law; yet sometimes the issue, which the operation of these laws produces, is so different from anything which created reason could have expected, that men consent to say, 'This is the finger of God.' Since God presides over the physical and the metaphysical worlds alike, it cannot be that the plan of the one should be wholly alien from that of the other, however vast the differences which sometimes distinguish

the apostles had not received a literary or legal training. 'Simplices quique ne dixerim imprudentes et idiotæ, quæ major semper credentium pars est' (Tertull. *Adv. Prax.*, 3).

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 9. This passage does not agree with either the Heb. or the LXX. of Isa. lxiv. 4, lxv. 17. Origen (followed by Meyer and others) says, 'Invenitur in secretis Eliæ prophetæ'—an apocryphal book. Schwegler (*Nach. Zeit.*, 352) argues that Hegesippus, because he refers with disapproval to one who used this expression, was an Ebionite, and opposed to St. Paul.

them. To the eye of an observer, who was content to regard secondary causes alone, there might have seemed to be in chaos all the 'promise and potentiality' of cosmos. Yet only an Infinite Mind could have recognised the existence and concurrence of those conditions, and only the Infinite Power could have made the fiat effectual at the critical moment. To Gibbon the rise and spread of Christianity seemed to have been owing to political, social, and religious conditions which existed in the Roman, Jewish, and heathen world at the time of its origin. But, admitting the existence of all these conditions, we must yet look higher for the wisdom and power by which that, which seemed to be the feeblest of systems, at that very time proved its ability to combine all these conditions, and to employ them successfully in its own service. Supposing that the hypothesis of the evolution of animal life from lower forms should prove to be true, yet it would not supersede the necessity of reference to creating skill and goodness, which, at a particular point, intervened to produce a creature like man, who has reason, speech and religion, from organisms which have none of them.[1]

So was it with the genesis of the Church. 'In the beginning God created the' new 'heaven and the' new 'earth.' The Church, the creed, the ministry, were all born together on that day of marvellous 'beginning.' Had not the prophet said that the day when the 'living waters

[1] See Dr. Hatch's remarks, *Organis. of Early Churches*, p. 214, where he makes use of a position taken by Dr. Pusey in reply to the scientists. If fresh discoveries respecting the mode of creation do not interfere with the *fact*, neither need discoveries respecting the formation of the Church invalidate the divinity of its institution.

shall go out from Jerusalem' shall be 'one day which shall be known to the Lord'?[1] The sudden apparition of this new 'commonwealth of Israel' in all its perfection seemed to suggest the apocalyptical vision of the New Jerusalem, descending like a bride adorned for her husband. Its advent, like that of creation, was noiseless. The only sound that broke upon the ear was that 'rushing of a mighty wind' which deaf chaos heard as 'the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.' No echoes of ecclesiastical axe or logical hammer reverberated as this house built by David's 'greater Son' assumed its heavenly proportions. More manifestly than in Solomon's time, 'the glory of God filled the house.'[2] That glory had now found a 'spiritual house.' The hundred and twenty were 'all filled with the Holy Ghost,'[3] and 'there were added to them in that day about three thousand souls.'[4] The Spirit was first and the Church followed. 'It is not first the Church and then the Spirit; but conversely, the Spirit forms the Church as the sphere and organ of His working.'[5] The baptism of fire brought the gift of convincing speech; and this was followed by the grace of repentance and the power of faith. The original creed of the Church of God, which had enshrined for so many ages the doctrine of the Divine Unity, was now found to contain the unknown treasure of the Sacred Trinity. Thus Christian theology

[1] Zech. xiv. 7, 8, 'an only day' (Keil and Del.). But the reference to Gen. i. 5 in יוֹם אֶחָד cannot be mistaken: 'the first day,' A. V.; but R. V. has 'one day' in Gen.

[2] 2 Chron. vii. 1.

[3] On Acts ii. 4, ἐπλήσθ. πάντες, Chrysost. says (Meyer), 'He would not have said "all" except others had shared.'

[4] Acts ii. 41.

[5] Pope's *Compend.*, ii., 330.

in its fulness had a real existence, though none could then make it explicit.[1] Only the glory of the Father was seen to encompass also His Son whom He had raised from the dead; and the energy of the Spirit, which more than filled the disciples' souls, was felt to be the very power of God.

But the working of the same Spirit very soon impelled the first Christians to unfold their belief in detail. Already Peter had spoken of Jesus, whom the Jews had crucified, as 'both Lord and Christ.'[2] He was 'David's Lord,' though certainly David's Son; He was the Messiah of the prophets, though still he spoke of Him as 'a man approved of God.'[3] A full theological definition of the atonement was scarcely possible; yet Peter shows that the death of Jesus had happened 'through the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God'[4]—that His sufferings were therefore an important part of the Divine plan. They who believed were baptized 'in the name of Jesus Christ.'[5] In order to mark the Saviour's place in prophecy he speaks of Him as the 'Servant'[6] of God, yet Him 'God had glorified.' The Holy Spirit also, who was the Author of the wonders of Pentecost, was the same who had spoken

[1] 'The most perfect of all truth was imparted to the world not in one uniform code, at one single moment of time, but by a gradual process lasting through more than half a century' (Stanley, *Apost. Age*, p. 13). 'In the New Testament Christianity does not appear in exactly constructed dogmas, but in the form of Christ's witness of Himself by word and deed, and of the faith of the apostles; . . . but the further work of forming dogmas in unison with the objective Christianity is not superfluous or forbidden' (Dorner, *Person of Christ*, i., p. 73). 'The apostolic age is full of primal fire and spirit . . . it is, besides, an age rich in ideas . . . its most characteristic mark at first was not the Christian graces, but a holy, Divine life' (*ibid.*, p. 93).

[2] Acts ii. 36. [3] Acts ii. 22. [4] Acts ii. 23. [5] Acts ii. 38.

[6] Isa. xlii. 1, 19. The R. V. has '*servant*' for παῖς in Acts iii. 13, 26, etc., which the A. V., following the Vulg. *puer* and *filius*, had rendered 'child' and 'son.' See Lechler, *Apostol. Zeitalt.*, pp. 26–29.

'by the mouth of David' and the prophets, and was plainly, in power and person, Divine.[1] In after days arose questions which could not have been earlier brought into conscious recognition. Can the Gentiles be admitted into the Church on any other condition than their first becoming Jews? Is Judaism essential to Christianity, or can men be saved without circumcision, and without the sacrifices of the temple? Does faith in Jesus make the ungodly righteous 'without the works of the law,' or, are works necessary to give validity to the faith which saves? Is Jesus, our Lord, really God; and, if so, was He, when on earth, a real man, or was His humanity merely an appearance assumed for the work of redemption? These questions had all to be met eventually. But, in the beginning, admission to the Church was dependent only on simple faith in the risen and exalted Jesus who had been crucified. He was the Messiah for whom their fathers had looked; and He was their Lord, their Life, their All.

> 'Meek, simple followers of the Lamb,
> They lived, and spake, and thought the same;
> They joyfully conspired to raise
> Their ceaseless sacrifice of praise.
>
> 'With grace abundantly endued,
> A pure, believing multitude,
> They all were of one heart and soul,
> And only love inspired the whole.
>
> 'O what an age of golden days!
> O what a choice, peculiar race!
> Washed in the Lamb's all-cleansing blood,
> Anointed kings and priests to God.'[2]

As long as the Church was confined to Jerusalem, its government was naturally in the hands of the twelve apostles. They had been appointed to be witnesses of the

[1] Acts i. 2, 16, ii. 4.

[2] *Wesley's Hymns*, No. 16.

life, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord.[1] They had been sent to testify of Him, and to gather and feed the flock of Christ. But they pretended to no absolute authority, and exercised no sacerdotal functions. On the contrary, they continued to attend temple services, where the Jewish priesthood alone could officiate. As the friends and companions of Jesus they could not but be held in high repute. The interest which would attach to any one who had been associated with, or had even 'seen the Lord,' appears in many ways,[2] and especially in the fact that after the death of the second James, Simeon was elected his successor, because he was a relative of the Saviour.[3] Yet St. Paul did not reckon himself 'a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.' It is from this original circle of disciples that we receive our Lord's sayings, 'One is your master, and all ye are brethren;' 'He that is least among you, the same is great.' On critical occasions they admitted to their council the congregation of believers, especially the 'elders' and the first disciples. The vacancy caused by the death of Judas was filled by a lot taken among the hundred and twenty. When Paul and Barnabas came to Jerusalem from Antioch, 'they were received of the Church, and the apostles and the elders.'[4] The gifts of teaching, prophecy, and evangelism, were not confined to the apostles, or to persons whom they had ordained.[5]

[1] Acts i. 21, 22; 1 Cor. xv. 8. [2] Eus., *H. E.*, iii., 11.

[3] 1 Cor. ix. 1, xv. 5-8; 2 Cor. v. 16; 1 John i. 1.

[4] In Acts xv. 23, the R. V. has, 'The apostles and the elder brethren,' which is technically better than the A. V. But see v. 22: 'It seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole Church.' A writer in the *Quart. Rev.*, July, 1885, charges the Revisers with 'ignorance' in making this change.

[5] Acts viii. 4, ix. 10, xi. 19, 27, xiii. 1, xv. 35, xviii. 26, 28;

So far as can be observed, the 'twelve' were the only persons who were at first exclusively engaged in the service of the Church. They had the principal work of exhortation and edification to perform; and besides, had the temporal arrangements of the Church under their control.[1] Therefore, as the number of believers increased, it was necessary to appoint other officers to relieve them of some part of their duties. The apostles had been the visible centre of the Church's unity: the believers 'continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in the prayers.'[2] But a Church destined to fill the world could not be kept in the immediate presence of twelve men in one city, nor be retained under their immediate supervision. 'The apostles had an incontestable call to form a Church organization, and they undertook the work. But they proceeded with the most cautious moderation. They did no more at once than existing need demanded, and so did it, that the gradually increasing Christian organization was not more their work than that of the new Christian life itself.'[3]

The first step was to appoint certain officers to attend to secular business, which had hitherto been discharged by the apostles. In appointing them, 'the twelve called the

Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. xiv. 1. Hilary the deacon says that at first 'omnes docebant et omnes baptizabant.'

[1] Acts iv. 35, vi. 2–4.

[2] The late Bp. Wordsworth gave a characteristic interpretation of Acts ii. 42: 'The apostles' doctrine (*i.e.* teaching on matters of faith, practice and worship), and fellowship (*i.e.* in visible communion with the apostles), in the breaking of bread (*i.e.* in the reception of the holy sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ), and in the prayers (*i.e.* in the public liturgy of the Church)' (*Church History*, i. 9). Did he mean the temple 'liturgy' or the Anglican?

[3] Rothe, *Anfänge d. Christ. Kirche*, p. 146. See also Dr. Gregory's *Lecture on the Church*, pp. 25, 26; and Dr. Pope's *Compendium*, iii., p. 265.

multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, . . . Look ye out . . . seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.'[1] The position and duties of candidates for the ministry, afterwards called 'Deacons' or 'Ministers,' do not correspond to those of the 'Seven.'[2] From the position occupied in this matter by the apostles, we see to what important duties the ministers of the gospel are called. It becomes very clear that a ministry separated to the word of God and to prayer is not only lawful but expedient, in the highest sense of the word; and is even necessary for the

[1] Acts vi. 3. Cf. Beecham's *Const. of Meth.*, p. 90.

[2] 'The office of these deacons was to minister at the table in the daily love-feasts, and to attend to the wants of the poor and the sick' (Schaff, *Hist. of Ch.*, ii., p. 499). The 'stewards' among Methodists, 'deacons' among Nonconformists, resemble the 'Seven.' 'Their connection with the deacons of later age is doubtful' (Stanley, *Apost. Age*, p. 59). 'The seven Hellenistic Christians are generally (though improperly) called the seven deacons, and were elected to supply a temporary emergency' (Conybeare and Howson, ch. xiii.). Lechler (*Apost. Zeitalt.*, p. 362) observes that 'deacons' appear first in Gentile-Christian Churches, *e.g.* Phil. i. 1; Rom. xvi. 1, Phœbe, deaconess at Cenchrea. Cf. Pliny, *Ep.*, x. 97, *Ancillæ quæ ministræ dicebantur.*

Gieseler (*Ch. Hist.*, i., 80) intimates that Cyprian (*Ad Rog.*, 65) first called ministerial probationers deacons, while Chrysostom and the Council of Trullo distinguish them. But Eusebius (*H. E.*, vi., 43) says that at Rome in the third century there were only 'seven' deacons. This was plainly their identification with the Hellenists. By Clement it was suggested that they corresponded to the Levite or lowest order of the priesthood. Boehmer (*Diss. Jure Eccles.*, p. 377) identifies them with the first presbyters—a view which Bp. Lightfoot regards as 'a strange perversity.' Bp. Lightfoot (*Phil.*, p. 186) assumes the identity of deacons with the 'Seven;' yet, with his usual candour, allows that the title was not applied to these in Acts vi. Ritschl (*Entsteh. der Altkath.*, p. 355) holds Boehmer's opinion to be probable. Justin (*Apol.*, i., 65) says the deacons distributed the bread and wine; and Ignatius (*Ad. Trall.*, ii.) on this account speaks of them as ministers 'of the mysteries of Jesus Christ.' These references connect the deacons of the primitive Church with the 'Seven,' who were called to assist in the 'daily ministration' (ἡ διακονία ἡ καθημερινή); only, this does not indicate the founding of a new but permanent 'order' in the Church.

perpetuation, extension, and unification of the Church. With respect to all else in the government of the Church, let us hear Dr. Hatch[1]: 'There is not a single statement of the New Testament, or a single fact of Church history, that is not compatible with the belief, which is parallel to almost all else that we know of the working of God, whether in nature or in grace, that the Christian communions have a free right of organization, that different forms of organization have been developed by the force of circumstances as the ages have gone on, and that the forms of organization which survive are survivals of the fittest, and thereby part of the moral government of God.' It was not surely intended that the exact arrangements of the first age in Jerusalem should be followed in every subsequent age and in every other place. It is confessed that the apostles could have no real successors. Their followers did not pretend to the possession of their gifts, could not claim their rights. Others beside themselves exercised spiritual powers. All that is said of Ananias, who carried consolation to the humbled Saul, is that he was 'a certain disciple at Damascus.' Through him Paul received his authority to preach: 'The Lord hath sent me that thou mayest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost.'[2] Paul himself tells us in Gal. i. 1 what we are to understand by this ordination.[3] He says that he became 'an apostle, not

[1] Reply to Canon Liddon in the *Contemp. Review*, June, 1885.

[2] Acts ix. 17.

[3] The 'ordination' referred to in Acts xiii. 3 appears to have been a special designation to a separate mission. Paul says, Gal. i. 1, that he was 'an apostle not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ:' οὐκ ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων, οὐδὲ δι' ἀνθρώπου. Ordination was one of the customs derived from Judaism: see Hatch, *Organization*, etc., p. 135, who refers to Buxtorf,

from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ.' That there was no such rigid distinction of office as that which subsequently arose is certain. Paul and Barnabas acted as 'ministers' or 'deacons' when relief was sent to the poor Christians in Jerusalem.[1] On their return from Lycaonia, Paul and Barnabas 'appointed for them elders in every Church'—such elders as had been from the beginning of the Church in Jerusalem, and even before that time in the Jewish synagogues and social confederations.[2]

Wunsche, etc., and quotes Augustine, *De Bapt.*, iii., 16: 'Quid alium est manuum impositio quam oratio super hominem?'

In 2 Tim. i. 6 it is said, 'Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands.' But in 1 Tim. iv. 14 it is said again, 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.' There is no contradiction. The 'gift,' τὸ χάρισμα, was τοῦ Θεοῦ, *of God*. The prayerful imposition of hands by the apostle and presbyters was the divinely chosen occasion for the impartation of the gift. *Mutatis mutandis*, there are such ordinations still.

[1] Acts xi. 29: εἰς διακονίαν, R. V. 'for relief.' In Acts i. 17, 25, the apostleship is called *deaconship*. The R. V. in Acts xii. 25, etc., translates διακονία, *ministration*. In 1 Cor. iii. 5, Paul and Apollos are called 'deacons through whom ye believed.' 'Apostle' was not confined to the twelve, see Gal. i. 18; Acts xiv. 4; Rom. xvi. 7, etc.

[2] Acts xiv. 23: χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς κατ' ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτέρους. Liddell and Scott, *s.v.*, say: 'χειροτ. to stretch out the hand, especially for the purpose of giving one's vote in the Athenian ἐκκλησία.' Lechler rightly objects (*Apost. Zeit.*, p. 358) to the Ultramontane interpretation (Vulg. *constituissent*), yet thinks there was a choice by the apostles. This is the signification accepted by the Revisers; but it scarcely answers to *an election by the Church*, which the word fairly implies: (Beza, *cumque ipsis per suffragia creassent*). In the only other place where the expression occurs, the R. V. gives 'appointed by the Churches.' Clem., *Ep.*, i., 44, speaks of ministers 'appointed by [the apostles] with the consent of the whole Church.' Ritschl argues (*Entsteh. d. Altk. Kir.*, p. 263), that apostolic ordination was the recognition of the charismata, and not the means by which they were communicated. Canon Cook (*Speaker's Commentary*), on Acts xiv. 23, says that Paul and Barnabas only appointed 'one elder in each, where there were several Churches in the same city;' but this remark in favour of the monarchian theory cannot be substantiated; see Rothe, *Anfänge*, pp. 184, 185. The 'Teaching of the Twelve Apostles' says (xv. 1), 'Elect therefore for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord.' On the position

Thus, with all the unconsciousness of infancy, the Church was born and cradled. No man knew 'whereunto these things would grow.' The princes of this world knew nothing of it. The historians of Greece and Rome passed it by without notice.[1] Its unity was in its life. It had no philosophy, though heir to the 'wisdom of God,' and destined to confound every 'disputer of this world.' It had no politics, though it introduced a citizenship of its own, and was to smite mighty empires into the dust. It had no priesthood, no sacrifices, no temple; yet it began at once to dissolve the worn-out priesthoods of antiquity, to abolish their sacrifices and to claim for God every heart as a temple. Among the kingdoms and principalities of earth had appeared an altogether new association of men—an *ecclesia*, a church, a fellowship of love. Yet this nascent ecclesiasticism, with the apostles at its head—the prototypes and warrant of all true ministers to the end of time—like every other organism, possessed an inherent power to select and adapt the forms which its own growth should require. Its theology also was immanent in the facts of earlier revelation, and in the recent manifestation of the Son and Spirit of God, but waiting until the enlarging

held by the 'elders' among the Jews, see Hatch (*Organization of Early Churches*, pp. 56–69). No one questions that the primitive Church and its offices were fashioned more after the pattern of the synagogue than after that of the temple: see Vitringa, *De Synagoga vetere*.

[1] Josephus scarcely notices Christianity. Ritschl suggests that this was because Christianity was looked upon as a Jewish sect until the end of the first century. It was so regarded certainly until Nero's time (see Renan, *L'Antechrist*, p. 13: 'Dès cette époque la distinction nette des juifs et des chrétiens se fit à Rome pour les personnes bien informées'). The first external references to the new religion are the well-known passages: Pliny to Trajan, x., 97 (A.D. 107); Tacitus, *Ann.*, xv., 44 (A.D. 110); Sueton. in Claud., xxv. (A.D. 116).

experience and advancing intelligence of the Church demanded its formal exposition. We cannot think that the full significance of these early facts and teachings is known to the Church even yet.[1]

It is not difficult to trace a resemblance between this course of providential events and that which attended the origin of Methodism. It also began with a few persons who desired 'to flee from the wrath to come,'[2] and waited 'for the promise of the Father.'[3] Like the first believers, they continued 'in fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and the prayers.' Like them they were soon persecuted, had to suffer contempt, reproach and loss. At Oxford they were called 'Sacramentarians,' 'Bible-moths,' 'Bigots,' and, to gather all the bitterness, hostility, and pungency of dislike into one word—'Methodists.' But what they sought was the 'life of God in the soul of man.' They sought it in prayer, in the reading of Scripture, of the Fathers and of other holy authors, and in doing good. College-rooms, which had so often echoed to the coarse jests of the young Englishmen of that time, were filled with the soft murmur of friends in prayer, the gentle strains of Christian hymns, or the earnest tones of students who

[1] 'The Lord hath more truth and light yet to break forth from His holy word' (J. Robinson, Leyden). 'Nor is it at all incredible that a book which has been so long in the possession of mankind should contain many truths as yet undiscovered' (Butler's *Analogy*). 'If so great and considerable a part of the world as America is, being as large as all the other three, . . . was yet unknowne to all the world besides, for so many generations together: well may it be conceived, not only that some, but many truths, yea and those of maine concernment and importance, may be yet unborne' (Pref. to J. Goodwin's *Treatise on Justification*). 'Apostoli interdum tetigere mysteria, quorum declaratio plenior postmodum per ipsos erat exitura' (Bengel on Acts ii. 42).

[2] Matt. iii. 7. [3] Acts i. 4.

enquired into the original languages of Scripture. In a manner which none could have pre-arranged, the Wesleys and their friends were led to the knowledge of salvation through faith alone. They had been sacramentalists: but now they were constrained to own that baptism had not brought them true regeneration, nor had their frequent visits to the communion table secured them a true fellowship with God. They were led by a way that they knew not; and the conversion of the judaizing Saul of Tarsus to the universalism of Christianity was only more astonishing than that of the sacerdotalizing John Wesley to evangelical truth.[1]

Having been led into the experience of salvation—apart from familiar lines of ritual or ecclesiasticism, Wesley and

[1] The Wesleys retained some of their early ecclesiastical views to the end of life. Dr. Rigg (*The Churchmanship of John Wesley*, pp. 19–34) has conclusively shown that John Wesley was not really a High Churchman after the great change in 1738. He also notices Miss Wedgwood's striking remarks on Wesley's conversion: 'Wesley's homeward voyage in 1738 marks the conclusion of the High Church period. . . . The birthday of a Christian was shifted from his baptism to his conversion, and in that change the partition line of two great systems is crossed.'

In his own way Dr. Curteis appreciates the importance of Wesley's 'conversion.' This is what he says in his Bampton Lecture (*Church and Dissent*, p. 359): 'So, on Wednesday, May 24, 1738, about nine P.M., at a society's meeting in Aldersgate Street, Wesley persuaded himself [*sic*] that he too had felt the desired transition, and had passed—from what, to what? In the answer to that question lies the whole doctrinal difference between modern Wesleyanism and the Church of England. I am not aware of any other cause of severance than this.' We need not wonder that Wesley's intelligence and sincerity were not appreciated at Oxford in his own days.

'This Oxford Methodism, with its almost monastic rigours, its living by rule, its canonical hours of prayer, is a fair and noble phase of the many-sided life of the Church of England, and, with all its defects and limitations, claims our deep respect. But it was not the instrument by which the Church and nation were to be revived; it had no message for the world, no secret of power with which to move and quicken the masses. To do this it must become other than it was. It must die, in order to bring forth much fruit. And this death and rising again were accomplished in the spiritual

his friends went everywhere preaching the doctrine of 'Free Grace.' They did not know that they should awaken England, America, the world, to religious earnestness. They went out to preach the gospel, and not, as Southey once said, 'to form a Church.' The object which they had proposed was not permanently attained. They did design to create a society within the Church of England, which should minister to its life and fruitfulness. The Wesleys, to the end of life, declined to leave the national Church; and, as inevitably leading to this, to sanction the administration of the sacraments in their societies.

It was perfectly consistent therefore with the genesis and spirit of the conversion of Wesley that he should not ask from his members any precise confession of opinions. In the course of time Methodist doctrine had to be defined, in its separation from Calvinism, and from the mysticism of Moravianism.[1] The excesses of some, and the prejudices of others, constrained him to explain and defend his doctrine of 'Christian Perfection.' But in every instance Wesley ventured to rely upon the combined testimony of Scripture and experience. He valued the expositions of Church fathers and of all pious writers, but never allowed them to take the position of inspired authorities.[2] There

change wrought in John Wesley, the leader of the earlier and of the later Methodism.'—F. W. Macdonald (*Fletcher of Madeley*, p. 25).

The spiritual condition of the Wesleys before their conversion was similar to that of the disciples before the day of Pentecost. They were under the teaching of the Lord, and served Him with sincere affection. They were 'servants,' but not 'sons.' The transition is well described in Wesley's 'Journal,' May 24th, 1738.

(See Appendix to this chapter, p. 40.)

[1] *Min. of Conf.*, 1744, 1749, 1770. See also Fletcher's *Works*.

[2] 'Let me be *homo unius libri* . . . I sit down alone: only God is here

was a time when Wesley might have fallen into the error of narrowing his belief and teaching within the lines of solifidian and antinomian views. But while he strongly held the Pauline doctrines of grace, of justification by faith alone, of man's utter helplessness and sinfulness, he also apprehended, with remarkable distinctness, the opposite phase of a true evangelical system. He held that the ruin of the fall had not suspended human responsibility. He showed that the grace of salvation had come upon all men for their good. They who believed were diligently warned that the benefit of Christ did not exempt them from the vocation to good works; but that, being freed from the burden of guilt and from the power of sin, they were under obligation to observe the whole law of God. Their salvation, made possible by the work of Christ, and becoming effectual by the grace of the Holy Spirit, must be made actual by living faith, and by obedience to all the commands of the Lord. Though it is 'God which worketh in' us, 'both to will and to work, for His good pleasure,' yet we must 'work out' our 'own salvation with fear and trembling.'[1]

Dr. Döllinger[2] has only partially penetrated the purport of Wesley's theology at this point. He says: 'The experience of some years convinced him [J. Wesley] as well as

. . . Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? . . . I lift up my heart to the Father of lights . . . I then . . . consider parallel passages of Scripture. . . . If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God; and then the writings whereby, being dead, they yet speak' (Preface to *Sermons*).

[1] Phil. ii. 12: τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε: 'the intensive κατὰ indicating the carrying through of the ἔργον' (Ellicott). 'Operamini usque ad metam' (Bengel).

[2] *Church and Churches*, p. 181.

his brother Charles that Protestant justification by faith and Calvinistic predestination were the utter ruin of all serious religious life. "We must all fall," he wrote to his brother, "through solifidianism, if we do not summon James to our help." It was a striking proof of his personal greatness that in 1770 he was able to make his own sect turn from Calvinism and to become Arminians. He obtained an effective support in his friend Fletcher, whose writings against the Protestant system are the most important that the theological literature of England has to show.'

But it is the merit of Wesley and Fletcher that they have retrieved evangelical Protestantism from the imputation that it precludes the practical teaching of the New Testament.[1] They did not, like Bishop Bull and many Anglican divines, deny the doctrine of justification by faith in order to establish that of justification by works. They did not, as Luther, in some unfortunate phrases and expressions which were at variance with his real convictions, deny the necessity of diligent striving after holiness, and of reverence for ordinances. They did not separate St. Paul from St. James as he did, when he called the Epistle of James 'a right strawy epistle.' They saw that St. Paul, whose writings are full of practical exhortation, preached the same gospel that was advanced by the 'twelve,' who preached Christ more especially to the Jewish people. They therefore declared 'the whole

[1] 'To Mr. Wesley it was given by Christ, the Head of the Church, to remove the theological odium under which Arminianism had long groaned' (*Centenary Sermon* by Rev. J. Anderson, Liverpool, 1839). On the history of Arminianism, see Stevens' *Hist. of Methodism*, ii., p. 54.

counsel of God.' Methodism parts for ever from Romanism by its doctrine of justification by faith. 'It is endless,' says Wesley, 'to attack one by one all the errors of that Church. But salvation by faith strikes at the root, and all fall at once where this is established.'[1] It quite as decisively parts from the antinomian heresy. While it carefully distinguishes between justification and sanctification, which the Council of Trent and many Anglican teachers confound, it yet insists upon personal holiness as the 'mark of the new birth,' and essential to salvation. The experience of Wesley and of his followers led him to make prominent the doctrine of conscious salvation. He re-asserted a truth that the neglect of Scripture and the reign of spiritual darkness had obscured the doctrine of the Witness of the Spirit.[2] But he not only insisted that the reception of this benefit was the privilege of all believers, but also taught that, associated with it, in every case, was the 'indirect witness' which issued from a change of heart and life.[3] We can therefore afford to smile at the caricature (not intentional) of Methodist teaching, which is given by Dr. Döllinger.[4] 'Their preaching is, above all things, calculated to heat the imagination and the bodily sensations; its awakenings are then regarded as inspirations and effects of the Spirit. They have, like a certain physician, only one medicine for all ages, sexes, and classes, without any distinction. Their uniform method is to frighten people to the brink of insanity, and then to lead them to absolute certainty of

[1] Serm. i. : 'Salvation by Faith.'
[2] See the Fernley Lect. (1882), by Rev. R. N. Young.
[3] See Serm. x., xi., xii.
[4] *Church and Churches*, p. 182.

being in a state of grace. The effect of it is such that in districts where Methodism is very prevalent an actual change takes place in the physiognomy of the people, and you find an unusual number of hard, coarse, gloomy faces.'[1] It is quite true that the early Methodists were serious, but they were also happy. They were led to include in their conception of the religious life very wide spheres of human feeling, just as in their theological theory they comprised phases of spiritual truth which had been before thought to be incompatible.

In this way, by successive steps, the theology of Methodism came into clear outline. Within its limitations at this day, the minds of twenty-five millions of professing Christians are content to move, besides those of millions more whose judgments are more or less influenced by them. We claim for this system no divine authority, no credit of absolute inspiration. It was not prepared by a council of theological experts, of trained logicians, who scanned every syllable and weighed every iota. It was not hurriedly carried through the turbulence of a Concilium, nor passed by the narrow vote of synods. It answers to apostolic teaching, because it arose out of a similar history and similar causes. It is scientific, because it is an explanation of facts.[2] It was formulated as an expression

[1] It is a sufficient reply to this that the only authority quoted by Dr. D. is the *Quart. Rev.*, iv., 503, A.D. 1810.

[2] 'I joined the Methodists because they were the instruments of my salvation, and because all their principles and institutions, so far as I understood them, agreed with that new nature which I received when I believed in Christ, and felt "the love of God shed abroad" in my heart by "the Holy Ghost given unto me"' (*Life of Rev. T. Jackson*, p. 489).

'The point of unity from which both dogmatics and ethics start as their immediate source of knowledge, is Christian experience or Christian faith . . . It may be pronounced to be the universal scientific conviction of the present

of truths realized in the experience of multitudes. If not philosophic, in the sense of the schools, it may yet help the solution of some problems of religion, by suggesting what aspects of theology best suit the unsophisticated spiritual nature when consciousness is roused to its intensest state.

But to the universal Church it must be of interest that the theology which arose in connection with this burst of religious life is that of the Early Church.[1] This great upheaval of the religious mind of the Anglo-Saxon race during a century and a half has left untouched the pristine doctrine. Some theories of Church order have been almost subverted by the process which the evolution of Methodism has involved; but the truths of the New Testament and of the first creeds shine out more clearly. When so great a torrent has rushed down the valley, no wonder that houses built upon the sand have been swept away; but that which was built on the rock remains, and is yet more beautiful—clad in the rainbow which comes after the storm. It has often been the subject of remark that the various Methodist communities have retained their theological unity. Notwithstanding the serious controversies on questions of Church government, respecting which they separated from the parent Church, and that since their separation they have had perfect freedom of judgment, there have been few signs of deviation in this sphere.[2]

day . . . that all knowledge—and with knowledge every science has to do—presupposes experience, external or internal' (Dorner's *Hist. of Chr. Doct.* (Clark), i., 17).

[1] 'Whatever doctrine is new must be wrong; for the old religion is the only true one; and no new doctrine can be right unless it is the very same which was from the beginning' (Wesl. Serm. xiii.).

[2] Stevens, *Hist. of Methodism*, i., 58.

Unity on this ground will, it is believed, secure their practical unity in due time. But, meanwhile, this ought to bring comfort and assurance to every lover of Catholic theology. Christ has been preached among all nations and classes, apart from the older Church order which was once supposed to be essential to a true Christianity. New churches have arisen, gathering millions of souls, which have originated independent forms—separate and unheard-of customs of worship and evangelization, yet they have not swerved at all from the theology of the New Testament and the first Councils.[1] They have supplied able advocates of the authority of Scripture, and of the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation. The millions who look to them for religious instruction are taught that God is a Spirit, and that He is infinitely good and wise. They proclaim, in no halting breath, the awfulness and danger of sin, and that there is no Saviour but Christ. They invite fetish-worshippers in Africa to adore the living and true God, and the Brahmin of India to trust in Jehovah, the true Father of all. They exhort the Romanist to forsake every mediator but Jesus, and the Socinian to avail himself of the propitiation made by the Son of God for us. They encourage their followers everywhere to acquaint themselves with all that is written by Moses, and the Prophets, and the original Apostles; and,

[1] The following words of Bp. Beveridge are instructive (*Pandectæ Canonum*, 2 vols. 1672, Pref.): 'Nimirum novissimum hisce temporibus nova jactantur lumina, nova ac majora Spiritus Sancti dona simulantur: ideoque novæ credendi, novæ orandi, novæ prædicandi, novæ omnium ecclesiasticarum administrationum peragendi formulæ finguntur indies et celebrantur.' The venerable prelate was alarmed; Nonconformity was coming, and 'Acts of Uniformity' and 'Conventicle Acts' were in vain. He died in 1708. What would he have said of Methodism?

also, so far as they are able, with all that is written by the edifying and scriptural teachers of after times. Cannot members of other Churches rejoice with us in this matter? Because some theories of Church order are violated, is it nothing to them that our societies are universally loyal to Scripture doctrine? Is it of no evidential value that by the agency of this system millions from almost every race have been awakened to concern about the deepest interests of the soul, and, that nowhere have the truths witnessed by apostles and the early confessors been repudiated?[1] Has not the old truth been again and again sealed by the tears of penitents, by the ecstasy of believing multitudes, by the sanctity of reformed lives, and by the fresh virtues of converted pagans and reclaimed nations? Does the adaptation of the gospel to universal man need further witness now that Fiji and Tonga are evangelized? Those who speak of Methodism as a 'heresy' and a 'schism,' might discount their terror and loathing so much as to recognise the fact, that this singular apostasy from what they call 'catholic truth,' at least bears its own testimony to the abiding verities of that living gospel 'which abideth for ever.'[2]

But we must now endeavour to show how the ecclesiastical framework of this system, as well as its theological impress and tendency, grew up under the pressure of providential necessity, but always with the aim of following scriptural and apostolical models.

[1] The *Wesley Memorial Vol.* (New York, 1884), pp. 152, 153, gives an admirable sketch of Wesleyan theology, by Dr. G. Douglas.

[2] 'Churches, . . . not founded by apostolic men, yet are accounted apostolic because they are akin in doctrine' (Tert. *De Præscr.*, c. 32).

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER II.—Cf. p. 31.

The Doctrine of Conversion.

The doctrine of 'Baptismal Regeneration' was developed by Augustine, who said, 'Baptisma . . . . contra originale peccatum donatum est, ut quod generatione attractum est, regeneratione detrahatur.' But this claims for a Church rite what is the merit of the atonement of Christ.[1] It overlooks the fact that Christ 'lighteth every man coming into the world.'

'What marks the best Methodist teaching here? It, still more than Arminianism, developes the doctrine of prevenient grace, asserting that man is not to be found in the fallen state of nature simply, but the very nature itself is grace.'[2] 'The truth lies between the error of the Pelagians, who suppose that the unbaptized infants are sinless, like angels, and that of the Papists, who affirm that they are graceless, like devils.'[3]

Infants then, who die, are saved, being 'in Christ,' whether baptized or not. In Baptism and the Lord's Supper, says Dr. Dale, 'the communicants receive *something;* and what they receive is given to them by the authority of Christ.'[4] By this new term, 'something,' which Dr. Dale imports into theological terminology, the defenders of baptismal regeneration, transubstantiation, the 'Real Presence,' and the like, will be able to bring in 'anything.' Dr. Dale himself urges that this 'something' is neither justification nor regeneration. What blessing of the new covenant is there which cannot be included under either of these terms?

The Scriptures teach that every one who becomes

[1] Bp. Har. Browne (*XXXIX. Art.*, p. 250) says, not the 'taint,' but the 'condemnation,' of original sin is removed by baptism.

[2] Pope's *Higher Catechism of Theology*, p. 220.

[3] Fletcher's *Works*, i., 134.

[4] *Congregational Principles*, p. 124.

personally possessed of conscious salvation, does so by a believing reception of the word of God in Christ, by the Holy Spirit. 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation:' cf. John i. 12; Acts ii. 38; Rom. vi. 4–7; Gal. iii. 26, 27; Eph. ii. 5; Col. i. 11, ii. 12; Jas. i. 18.

Wesley certainly said that 'the Church supposed that all who were baptized in their infancy are at the same time born again.'[1] But he distinguished between the two parts of a sacrament, which did not always go together; and said further, 'Say not then in your hearts, "I was once baptized, therefore I am now a child of God." Alas! that consequence will by no means hold.'[2] Whitefield said, 'I would as soon believe the doctrine of transubstantiation as that of baptismal regeneration.'[3] Fletcher denied that 'material water could cleanse the soul.'[4] Some evangelicals yet hold distinctly by 'baptismal regeneration.' Of this class was the venerable Archbishop Sumner. It was by his book on *Apostolical Preaching* that J. H. Newman was led to accept this doctrine. (See *Diffic. of Anglicans*, p. 28.)

It is instructive to trace the connection of 'Regeneration' with baptism. Who ever heard of 'Baptismal Creation,' or 'Baptismal Resurrection'? Yet all these figures stand on an equal footing in the New Testament. The figure of 'the new birth' was chiefly used by the Galilean apostles; the others were as regularly used by St. Paul. Two of them, at least, have the foundation of their use in the teaching of our Lord. Concerning 'Regeneration,' see Matt. xviii. 3; John iii. 5; Jas. i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23; 1 John iii. 9, iv. 7. Concerning the spiritual resurrection, see John v. 21, 24; Rom.

[1] Wesley's Serm. xlv.
[2] Wesley's Serm. xviii.
[3] Whitefield's Sermon on the *New Birth*, Jan., 1750.
[4] Fletcher's *Works*, vii., 464; also his *Appeal* in i., 134.

vi. 4–11; Col. iii. 1–4. The 'new creation' is a figure which is chiefly used by St. Paul, as 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15. (But cf. Jas. i. 18; *ἀπαρχήν τινα τῶν αὐτοῦ κτισμάτων.*) St. Paul's language evidently echoes Ps. li. 10 (and that again Gen. i. 1, 2), 'Create (בָּרָה, LXX. *κτίσον*) in me a clean heart, O God (אֱלֹהִים); and renew (*ἐγκαίνισον*) a right spirit (רוּחַ) within me.' With 2 Cor. iv. 6 cf. Gen. i. 3; Ep. Barn. vi.

Commentators usually assume that these figures represent exactly the same aspects of 'Conversion' (*e.g.* Weiss, *Bib. Theol. N. T.*, ii., 134; Dean Scott, *Speaker's Comm.* in Jas. i. 18; Meyer on 2 Cor. v. 17; Huther on Tit. iii. 5; Lightfoot on Gal. vi. 15). Dr. Westcott on John i. 13 (*Speaker's Comm.*) discriminates more precisely between the use of Paul and that of the Galilean apostles. Cremer (*Lexicon N. T.*) attempts to explain *ἡ καινὴ κτίσις* by *ἀναγεννᾶν* and *παλιγγενεσία*, but the images are quite distinct. Besides, the 'new creation' includes something more than 'the new birth.' The latter is little more than the subjective spiritual change; the former includes something of the relative change, or justification. The guilt and condemnation of sin are included in the *ἀρχαῖα* = the old things which 'have passed away' (2 Cor. v. 17).

St. Paul scarcely uses the figure of 'the new birth.' He says, 1 Cor. iv. 15, 'For in Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel.' Mr. Beet[1] remarks that here his language is certainly 'an approach to the doctrine of the new birth;' and adds that 'to this doctrine Paul's only direct reference is Tit. iii. 5.' But the word there is *παλιγγενεσία*. This word is used in Matt. xix. 28 to represent the 'new beginning' which will take place when Christ comes. In Josephus, *Ant.*, xi., 3, 9, it describes the 'new beginning' under Zerubbabel. Cicero (*Attic.*, vi., 6) describes his own restoration under this term. It seems

[1] On Corinthians, *in loc.*

probable that St. Paul used this word not so much to exhibit the great change as a 'birth,' since this conception was not usual with him; but to emphasize the fact of the change or renewal.

It is worthy of remark that the Pauline figures—creation and resurrection—are scarcely employed by the *Apostolic Fathers* to represent the great inward change. Barnabas, *Ep.*, c. vi., says, 'When therefore He renewed (ἀνακαινίσας) us . . . as if He had formed us again (ἀναπλασσόμενος). For the Scripture speaks concerning us when He speaks to the Son, "Let us make man in our image . . ." He has made a second fashioning (δευτέραν πλάσιν) in these days . . . Behold, there we have been re-fashioned (ἀναπεπλάσμεθα) . . . we, by the faith of the promise, and being made alive by the word (τῷ λόγῳ ζωοποιούμενοι) shall live.' Cf. the same in c. xi.

Hermas, in the *Pastor*, has this enigmatical remark: 'The seal, then, is the water; they descend into the water dead, and they rise alive.'

Justin Martyr not only uses the Galilean ἀναγεννᾶν (*Ap.*, i., 66), but also expressions approximately Pauline: *e.g.* καινοποιηθέντες (cf. ἀνακαινοῦν, 2 Cor. iv. 16; Col. iii. 10). Also in *Dial. c. Tryph.*, c. xiv., he says: 'By reason therefore of this laver (διὰ τ. λουτροῦ) of repentance and knowledge . . . this is the water of life.' This passage certainly alleges that baptism 'purifies,' and that it is 'the water of life:' but (1) he limits its benefits to those who have repented. (2) In the very next sentence he adds—referring to Jewish baptisms: 'What is the use of that baptism which cleanses the flesh and body alone? . . . You have understood all things in a carnal sense' (*Dial. c. T.*, xliii.). Again (*Apol.*, lxi.): 'As many as . . . believe . . . and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and to entreat God with fasting, for the remission of their sins that are past . . . Then they are brought by us where there is water,

and are regenerated (*ἀναγεννῶνται*), in the same manner in which we ourselves were regenerated . . . in order that we may obtain in the water the remission of sins. There is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again, and has repented of his sins, the name of God the Father . . .' These expressions are very striking; but it must be remembered—(1) That this was the baptism of adults. (2) These benefits were attained by those who repented and believed. (3) The other teaching of Justin is against the notion that 'illumination' and inward 'regeneration,' or any other spiritual benefit, was conferred by the mere mechanism of a rite. It also shows that the original figure of 'regeneration' was becoming familiar as a synonym for baptism.

We cannot now attempt to describe the process by which 'regeneration' became separated from the repentance and faith in the divine word, originally held to be indispensable to it, and was attributed to baptism alone. Tertullian was unguarded; Cyprian was no example of evangelical clearness. The view of the latter was that baptism did not give the Holy Spirit. That came only by the imposition of hands—by confirmation. Eusebius (*H. E.*, vi., 43) relates that Cornelius charged Novatian that he had not received the Spirit, since he had never been confirmed by the Bishop. In order to make dependence on the Church secure, Augustine taught—(1) That original sin could only be taken away in baptism. (2) That even the baptized could not be certain that they were predestinated. Wickliffe and Calvin, on the other hand, insisted that as salvation was the subject of predestination, the Church could neither effect it nor prevent it. (See Pfleiderer's *Hibbert Lect.*, p. 271.)

The Methodist doctrine goes back on Scripture. It declares—(1) That the initial grace of general salvation comes to all men through Jesus Christ: Rom. v. 16. (2) That the individual, conscious of himself and his

actions, and therefore responsible, receives the gift of the Spirit on condition of repentance and faith. (3) The experience of salvation, while it makes the believer instinctively anxious for the means of grace, and the fellowship of the Church, itself is not dependent upon any of these.

CHAPTER III.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH.

'And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved.' [1]

'The priest is either Christ or Antichrist.' [2]

'Can any one carry High Church zeal higher? And how well have I been beaten with mine own staff!' [3]

'The Apostle's writings are not altogether agreeable to the order of things as now practised in the Church.' [4]

THE affinity of Methodism to evangelical Christianity, and the services it has rendered to it and is capable of rendering, have not yet been fully recognised. It is yet looked upon by some as the possible ally of clericalism, or the not vain hope of a State Church.[5] Yet it has broken down the supposition that ministers alone are the spiritual class. It recognises spiritual gifts in all members of the Church. It has shattered the doctrine, which has too much prevailed since the days of Cyprian, that there are no gifts of teaching, of edification, of

[1] Acts ii. 47. [2] Dr. Arnold. [3] J. Wesley. [4] Hilary the Deacon.

[5] The following remarks of Kahnis are worthy of consideration: 'The moral substance of the State is the popular spirit; the moral substance of the Church is the Holy Spirit. [This view of the Holy Spirit reduces the third Person of the Trinity almost to the level of a quality or influence, as is too common in Germany.] Both cannot prevail at the same time. When the Church finds its moral world in the national spirit, it goes back to heathenism. When the Church takes the State up into itself, it goes back on the standpoint of the Old Testament.' (*Lehre vom H. Geiste*, p. 153.)

exhortation, to be recognised, except those which are supposed to be conveyed by the imposition of hands, and by a priestly succession.[1] To some of us it will always be difficult to understand how Christianity could ever be regarded as a ceremonial religion.[2] A development out of a system of rites and symbolical services into the freedom of universal and independent access to God, seems to contradict itself when it turns its own accidents into inexorable essentials. We cannot be astonished that the Judeo-Christian converts of the first age were slow to accept the full theory of Christian freedom. They never left the worship of the temple so long as the sacred edifice remained.[3] They continued in all 'the ordinances of the law blameless.' Whether Judaism could be forsaken or not, became 'a burning

[1] 'It is much to be desired that those who think [that apart from the line of episcopal ordination there is no Church,] would take up the case of Methodism and deal with it thoroughly . . . The conditions of this very definite case preclude an evasive reply, such as this, "We cannot tell whether Methodism is from heaven or of men." . . . No one who is accustomed to pursue principles with logical severity into their consequences, will deny that the Apostolic Succession theory . . . must either break itself upon Methodism, or must consign Methodism and its millions of souls to perdition, in as peremptory a manner as that in which the Church of Rome fixes its anathema upon heretical nations.' (*Wesley and Methodism*, by Isaac Taylor, London, 1851, p. 132.)

[2] 'Christ's gospel is not a ceremonial law, as much of Moses' law was, but it is a religion to serve God, not in bondage of the figure or shadow, but in the freedom of the Spirit.' (Preface to the *Book of Common Prayer*.)

[3] Acts iii. 1, iv. 1, v. 12, xv. 1, xxi. 17–26. See Farrar's *Early Days of Christianity*, i., 483, ii., 16; Lechler, *Apost. Zeitalt.*, p. 281; Ritschl, *Entstehung*, p. 124.

It is supposed that this is why James, the brother of the Lord, the so-called 'Bishop of Jerusalem,' was surnamed the 'Just,' and had such influence among the people. (Hegesippus in Eus. *H. E.*, ii., 23.)

This also accounts for the fact that the Christians were looked upon so long as a Jewish sect. (Gfrörer, *Geschichte der Christ. Kirche*, p. 222.)

question;'[1] about it even apostles contended.[2] It was the secret of a great part of the persecution directed against St. Paul.[3] In the form of Ebionitism, the Jewish element continued to be a prolific source of heresy and of mischief to the Church in after-days.[4] When it was found necessary to unite the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians in one body, and, for this purpose, it was determined to replace the temple worship and the hierarchy of Judaism by analogous institutions, there arose the so-called 'Catholic Church.' Its triple ministry, its pretensions to the exclusive grace of salvation in the sacraments, and eventually the investment of the Bishop of Rome with the authority of Vicar of Jesus Christ, and the pre-eminent successor of the apostles, all descended, very naturally, from the Jewish ideas which prevailed in the early Church, and which too effectually withstood the more elevated and spiritual views of St. Paul.

[1] Acts xxi. 20, 'Many thousands there are among the Jews of them which have believed; and they are all zealous of the law' (*καὶ πάντες ζηλωταὶ τοῦ νόμου ὑπάρχουσιν*).

[2] Gal. ii. 11. [3] 2 Cor. xi. 26; Acts xxi. 20; Rom. xv. 29.

[4] The opinion of Schwegler (*Nachapost. Zeit.*, p. 104), held by the Tübingen school generally, that the original Christianity was Ebionitism, cannot be allowed, yet there can be no doubt that though the Ebionites followed a too-literal and narrow tradition of the doctrine of the Jewish apostles, they could plead their example. The remark of Hegesippus (Eus. *H. E.*, iv., 22), that the Church was a virgin, untainted by heresy, until the decease of Simeon, Bishop of Jerusalem, after which came the Gnostic and other heresies, has been a sore puzzle to historians and critics. If he were an Ebionite (as Schwegler, Baur, etc., allege), how strange that he should trace all error to the Jewish-Christian communities! If a Jewish-Christian only, or, 'formally sharing the judgment of Ebionites' (Westcott, *Bible in Church*, p. 107; Lechler, Neander, Schaff, Milligan, Fisher), the difficulty is almost as great, since he speaks so favourably of James. But there is evidence that most of the early heresies can be traced to Jewish legalism and literalism.

(See also Note at the end of this chapter.)

But when the Church had once attained its freedom, how strange that it should so soon forfeit it! Who could have anticipated the conflicts necessary for its recovery? The struggle with the dominant system, always unequal, has been embarrassed by the mistakes of the advocates of freedom. Montanism might have become a vindication of the truth, rather than a new error, if its first followers had all understood Scripture as well as Tertullian.[1] Novatian and Novatus might have been the regenerators of the Church in Cyprian's days, if they could have anticipated the lessons of the next thousand years.[2] We know how the Waldenses maintained, during long ages, a brave testimony for the rights of believers; and how John Wickliffe sent out preaching friars round many counties, bearing witness to a new life. Luther shrank from the logical results of his own principles, when he found that poor and illiterate men began to preach the gospel.[3] Calvin, possibly, saw further into the genius of the Christian scheme. The Puritans seemed generally to imagine that spiritual functions could only be discharged by men in some way ordained and separated to the ministry. England and the world owe a great debt to the perception and zeal and self-sacrifice of the

[1] Though this famous African was not above his times in many respects, he was better acquainted with the sacred oracles than some of his contemporaries.

[2] Each, on different grounds, opposed Cyprian. Their character is much abused by ecclesiastical historians.

[3] Hilary the Deacon says that 'in the early Church all taught and all baptized; but the Church began to be ruled by another order, because, if every one could perform all functions, the offices would seem to be vulgarized and disparaged.' Luther's opposition to the ministry of uneducated men was partly justified by the excesses of the Anabaptists and other visionaries.

Baptists, Independents, and Quakers, who were among the first to claim for every member of the Church the right—not merely to hold his own faith, but to urge the acceptance of it on other men.

When Wesley was first confronted with the phenomenon of lay-preaching, he was perplexed indeed. 'This was,' he says, 'to touch the apple of my eye.' But when he was challenged by his own mother's assertion, 'These men are as much called to preach as you are,' he was silenced. Their ministry received the blessing of God: 'The Holy Ghost fell on them that believed.' He had already appointed class-leaders; and what are they? They are persons appointed to 'watch over the souls' of their fellow-believers; and are expected to 'advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require.'[1] Private members of the Church—they are entrusted with spiritual functions. Such a step, in systematic form, had not been taken since the apostolic days. But in the apostolic days this very principle was habitually recognised. Apollos was instructed by Priscilla and Aquila. After the persecution in Jerusalem, the scattered disciples 'went about preaching the word.' Even in Jewish synagogues private persons were allowed to give a 'word of exhortation.'[2] Of Christian assemblies in Corinth it is said, 'Each one hath a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, an interpretation,' and all could 'prophesy, one by one.'[3] The 'superintendent' of a Christian congregation was not

[1] *Rules*, 1739.

[2] Our Lord regularly taught in the synagogues of Galilee (Luke iv. 15); and in the temple at Jerusalem (Matt. xxi. 23, etc.). So Paul and Barnabas in Pisidia and elsewhere.

[3] 1 Cor. xii.–xiv.

always the only teacher. Those who had special gifts for this duty gave instruction or exhortation. The 'elder,' or 'overseer,' managed the business of the Church, attended to its poor, visited its sick, sought out the feeble or faltering, and was responsible for the order of the community and the efficiency of its services. Nothing was more foreign to the idea of the early Church than that the gifts of the Spirit were confined to apostles and elders. That delusion only became possible in darker days.[1]

The true priesthood of all believers is affirmed everywhere in the New Testament, and by no one more emphatically than by St. Peter: 'Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ . . . Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.'[2] It was not until after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the consequent abolition of the Levitical system, that the Christian ministry began to be spoken of as a priesthood.[3] This terrible dispensa-

[1] *Pastor* of Hermas (*Ante-Nic. Lib.*, i., 368) speaks of the 'prophet' as coming into the assembly. See *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* on this subject. Here it is clear that the 'itinerant' ministry, commenced by apostles, went on into the next century at least. This itinerancy had a great influence in preserving the connexionalism of the first Churches.

[2] R.V. 'to be a holy priesthood.' The Text. Rec. omits εἰς, but Alford and Westcott, after A B C ℵ, restore it. Christians enter into the privileges promised to, but not obtained by, Israel. The First Epistle of Peter is full of the thought that believers are the true Israel, i. 18, 21, 23, ii. 25; cf. Gal. iii. 8, 14, 26–28, v. 6; Heb. iv. 3. See also Ignat. *ad Eph.* 9: 'Stones of the Temple of the Father,' 'God-bearers, temple-bearers.' Yet he was among the first to subvert the truth of the priesthood of the faithful.

[3] Cf. Clem. Rom. *Ep. ad Cor.* 40–43. Tert. *De Bapt.* calls a Bishop *summus sacerdos*. The *Apost. Const.* speak both of ἱερεύς and ἀρχιερεύς.

tion upon its city and people broke down the ancient prestige of Judaism, and delivered the Christian Church from a bondage into which it might have more deeply fallen. But it opened the way for a new temple service, and a fresh hierarchy,—'worse than the first.' Renan describes in his own vivid manner the effects of this catastrophe upon Judaism, but also shows how it enhanced the prospects of Christianity: 'Jerusalem se vengera de sa défaite ; elle vaincra Rome par le christianisme.'[1]

Of the subsequent history of the idea of the priesthood among Christians we cannot now speak. In these last days Methodism has, in its delegation of personal dealing with men's souls to a lay-agency, raised up a barrier to the sacerdotal system, which, we think, can never be broken down. This practical re-assertion of the true priesthood of every believer has rendered every statement of the traditional theory of 'apostolical succession,' and the like, a ludicrous anachronism. Now, all

Cyprian applies all the Old Testament sanctions of the priesthood to Christian ministers, *e.g.*, *Ep.* 54 (*Ant.-Nic. Lib.*, viii., 162, 3). Cf. Neander, *Planting of Christianity*, i., 269.

On the importance of the destruction of Jerusalem to the overthrow of Judaism, the extension of Christianity, and the advance of the Church of Rome, see Gfrörer, *Ges. C. K.*, p. 253. He traces, with some probability, the course of events in Rome to the powerful elements of Judaism, which found refuge there. All the Jewish Christians did not fly to Pella. Ritschl (*Entsteh. d. A. K.*, p. 259) supposes that the refusal of the Christians to join in the insurrection of Bar-cochba would tend to separate them from the Jewish people : and, yet more, the decree which admitted Christians, but excluded Jews from Ælia-Capitolina. Baur and Schwegler (*Nachap. Zeit.*, ii., 193) did not choose to see the vast importance which the subversion of Judaism had for Christianity. But see Rothe, *Anfänge*, p. 281 ; Lechler, *Ap. Zeit.*, p. 434 ; Farrar's *Early Days of Christianity*, p. 490.

[1] Renan, *L'Antechrist*, p. 534. Pfleiderer (*Hibb. Lect.*) attributes the change to the 'migration from Jerusalem to Rome.'

the Churches are glad to employ lay-preachers and lay-workers. Everybody owns that 'ministers' are too few and too feeble to gather in the world's harvest for Christ. An army cannot be made up of officers only. In so great a contest every Christian must be valiant for the truth. But Methodism was the first to act upon this conviction systematically. What the 'confessional' has been in the Romish Church, the class-meeting and similar associations are among evangelical Christians—but with this ineffable and ineffaceable difference. The confession is an instrument of priestcraft.[1] The class-meeting is a bulwark of spiritual freedom. All history—all experience, shows that the Church must have not only its public services and means of instruction, but also some method of reaching individual minds. Troubled souls crave for help, and perplexed minds long for direction. Men and women, awaking to the awful peril of the soul without God, and facing death with a conscience laden with guilty fear, will seek relief wherever it can be found. A Church which disregards these phenomena, failing to provide for anxious souls, and treating these anxieties of the disquieted spirit with supercilious disdain, has forgotten its mission. The Rome-ward reaction in the English Church during the last half-century has been largely owing to neglect at this point. The Tractarian party has made no secret of its employment of this powerful spiritual engine—the Confessional, with all its sacerdotal accompaniments of penance and absolution. The 'duly-qualified confessor' is again

[1] *Joannis Dallei de Sacramentali sive Auriculari Latinorum Confessione Disputatio*, Geneva, 1761, p. 40, etc. The veteran French Protestant in this book proves from Scripture that priests are not necessary to salvation. D. was great on the 'Fathers,' but equally great on Scripture.

a functionary of educational establishments connected with the Church of England. He is greatly in request for 'Missions' and 'Retreats.'[1] But 150 years ago the confessional, which had been abolished, had not been replaced by any other institution. There were no 'enquiry-rooms' attached to churches, and the 'class-meeting' had not been born. If no substitute had been found, it is tolerably certain that the Romish practice would have been back again with all its evils.

The awakening among the Oxford students in the first half of the eighteenth century was but one form of the revolt against a merely nominal religion. There were thousands in England beginning to feel that they had not fulfilled the whole law of Christ by going to church once a week; by listening to a brief homily on moral conduct from a minister who often knew little of the theory, and less of the practice of religion; by receiving the sacrament three or four times a year. There was sure to be a spring after a winter so long and dreary. Such books as Law's *Serious Call* would reach hundreds, even if prejudice would not allow them to read the writings of Alleine and Baxter. When the Church revival began among the Oxford Methodists, it seemed likely to lead back to ceremonial restoration, to priestly reassertion, to a general retreat from

[1] 'In one case we are informed that a single priest of the Church of England heard 1300 confessions in one year; and his case was not an exceptional one.' (Mellor on *The Priesthood*, p. 386.)

'The discipline adopted by them in their classes is simply a form of pastoral superintendence; and, though the class-meetings at which they tell their experiences have often been made occasions for the display of spiritual pride, their real object is that of confession—the unburdening of conscience.' (Blunt's *Dictionary of Heresies*.) But Dr. Blunt's view of the 'real object' of the class-meeting is too narrow. It is not so much the 'confessional,' as a 'communion of saints.'

the merely theoretical Protestantism which was so much at fault. But when it was attempted to put the new wine into the old bottles, the predicted event took place. However, the fresh life began to discover forms for its own manifestation. We do not know what might have happened if the Wesleys, on their way to America, had met with some able and earnest Jesuits, instead of simple Moravians.[1] They might have been led to seek rest in priestly absolution rather than in justifying faith. The difference which such a turn in their lives would have made to Britain, to America, to Australia, to the world, cannot be told. The flood of sacerdotalism which the Reformation compelled to retire, and which is yet sinking down into the valleys, might have risen once more to engulf the world. But the experience of salvation by faith made all the difference. It was not instruction in philosophy, nor the reading of ecclesiastical history, which led to this victory. The fact is, that ecclesiastical history has been spoiled by the hands through which it has passed. The fountains of knowledge have been corrupted; and to this day the young student is in danger, as many examples show, of ever-insidious and ever-active influences of perversion. Popery and sacerdotalism have been confounded by Scripture and by the work of the Holy Spirit on men's hearts: the gracious but irresistible providence of God, and not human learning or the testimony of 'Fathers,' has gained this victory. 'Salvation belongeth to the Lord.' It was this sure experience in his own heart of the 'things of God,' which revealed to Wesley the way of salvation for himself and for all men. He discovered

[1] 'Certain elements were wanting which were actively at work in Oxford a century later.' (*Dublin Rev.*, July, 1874.)

that the gospel, though containing all mysteries of God and man, was so simple that every believer might proclaim it among his fellows. Believers and enquirers meeting together, as in the primitive Church, became confessors 'one to another.'[1] By this providential expedient Christianity was rescued from its complicity with priestcraft. One of the mightiest transformations which the Church had ever known took place when Wesley appointed private members of it to watch over their fellow-members. The world which did not know when Christ came, nor when the Divine Spirit fell at Pentecost, and did not know what would result from Luther's theses, or from the voyage of the 'Pilgrim Fathers,' did not know what would come from the contemned 'societies' and 'classes' of the first Methodists. The Church, which had been too long the plaything of politicians, the sport of the profane, became in them what it was in Jerusalem, in Corinth, and in Rome in the first century,—the 'Communion of Saints.'[2] Instead of being a 'synagogue of Satan,' as it had too often submitted to be, it became a school for spiritual training, a home for the weary, a refuge for the lost, an arena where every gift of the manifold Spirit of God, operating on every faculty of consecrated souls, may find freest exercise and most abundant result. Louis XIV. could say, 'L'état, c'est moi.'

[1] Jas. v. 16: ἐξομολογεῖσθε οὖν ἀλλήλοις τὰς ἁμαρτίας, καὶ εὔχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων. Though this text is referred to in modern Roman Catholic books as an authority for auricular confession, the older interpreters of this school were not agreed. Confession to a priest was not known to Tertullian or Cyprian; and even Chrysostom says, 'God commands that to Him alone . . . we should confess.' Private confession was instituted in the 5th century by Leo the Great. It was not made obligatory until the Council of Lateran, A.D. 1215.

[2] On this point we must refer to Dr. Gregory's *Fernley Lecture*, pp. 71–98, and pp. 213–241.

Cyprian and Hildebrand almost authorized the clergy to say, 'The temple of the Lord are we.' Many attempts had been made through centuries of Church history to regain the full breadth of the apostolic foundation: but now, when men scarcely looked for it, a Church, destined to a world-wide extension, was formed of all that are beloved of God, 'called saints.'

While we lay this stress upon the personal experience of Wesley, as a principal factor in the direction given to his system, and in his deliverance from ecclesiastical bondage, we do not overlook his pre-eminent regard for Scripture as the word of God. A verse of Scripture was more to him than a volume of the 'Fathers.' He was deeply interested in the records and monuments of the primitive Church. Wherever he could, he followed a primitive custom, no matter how long it had been out of use. But he seems never to have yielded to the fatal delusion that 'the Scriptures should only be interpreted according to the consent of the Fathers.'[1] At one time the reading of Anglican writers perplexed him by their varying interpretations, and some one recommended to him the rule: *Consensus veterum; quod ab omnibus, quod ubique, quod semper creditum.* 'Nor,' says he, 'was it long before I bent the bow too far the other way, by making antiquity a co-ordinate rather

[1] A recent Roman Catholic writer (*Lehrbuch der Patrologie und Patristik*, von Dr. J. Nirschl, Mainz, 1881, v. i., pp. 13, 17) allows that only a 'moral unanimity' of the Fathers can be expected in some cases. He is careful to show that the 'Fathers' cannot be placed on a level with Scripture. He urges that the limitation, by the Council of Trent, of the authority of the Church to *res fidei et morum*, allows space (*Spielraum und ungehindert freie Bewegung*) for criticism. This theological professor also allows that the 'Fathers' have been corrupted by some who have had an 'excessive zeal for true doctrine and the rights of the Church.'

than a subordinate rule with Scripture; by admitting several doubtful writings, by extending antiquity too far, by believing more practices to have been universal in the ancient Church than ever were so.'[1] How many Englishmen have gone through this very process since his day! How many sincere men, who might have served Protestant Christianity as Wesley did, have been held fast by the powerful spell of the 'Fathers'! Of Archbishop Laud it is said by his biographer,[2] that 'his studies in divinity he had founded on the Holy Scriptures according to the glosses and interpretations of the ancient Fathers.' Unfortunately, it is not remembered by those who accept this rule that we have not the same security for the integrity and genuineness of patristic compositions, that we have for those which are scriptural. Besides, at best, they stand on a much lower level. Dr. Schaff says: 'I remember what great stress the late Dr. Pusey, when I saw him at Oxford in 1844, laid on the testimony of Irenæus for the doctrine of an unbroken episcopal succession, as the indispensable mark of a genuine catholic Church; while he ignored the simultaneous growth of the primacy, which a year afterwards carried his friend, J. H. Newman, over to the Church of Rome.'[3] Newman says: 'From Dr. Hawkins I learned another principle, "Tradition." The Scripture was never intended to teach doctrine, only to prove it; and if we would learn doctrine, we must have recourse to the formulas of the Church.'[4]

[1] Southey's *Life of Wesley* (1820), i., p. 108.

[2] Heylin's *Life of Arch. Laud*, 'Cyprianus Anglicus.'

[3] *Hist. of Ch.* (100–325 A.D.), i., p. 149.

[4] *Apologia*, p. 8. Newman remarks (*Difficulties of Anglicans*, p. 9) that 'the Fathers have catholicized the Protestant Churches at home,' and (p. 151) that 'the Fathers *would* protect Romanists as well as extinguish

That is, to put this most erroneous principle into plain English, we must only use Scripture to prove doctrines which we have already received.

But where Newman was weak, there, by the grace of God, Wesley was 'made strong.'[1] He escaped from Oxford, without being led to that final and fatal subordination of Scripture to tradition, which has been the bane of the High Church party to which he then belonged. He felt all his life the powerful influence which the University and its officers had exercised over him.[2] But he was enabled to shake off that influence so far as it led to any depreciation of the word of God below Church authorities. And soon his experience led him to another great principle of the Christian faith, which had been almost wholly obscured by ecclesiastical prejudice. He learned that the

Dissenters.' This of course applies only to those circles where Church authority was raised above Scripture. It also suggests what has been one of the motives actuating the Anglican revival. On this latter point Aug. Hare said (*Mission of the Comforter*, p. 1010): 'Some twenty years ago, when difficulties were assailing our Church on every side, a knot of men took it into their heads to assert that Episcopacy is an absolutely indispensable condition of Christ's Church. . . . We who were raised above the Church of Rome by . . . pure faith . . . if we were in like manner raised above other Protestant bodies by the possession of that form of government which is indispensable to the Church, to what a pinnacle of glory should we be raised! What a feather in our cap if we were the only pure branch of Christ's Church on earth! . . . Where are the texts? . . . They cannot produce one. This monstrous error which would restrict the power of Christ's mediatorial sacrifice and the efficacy of His sacraments within the limits of Episcopal Churches is still confined, I trust, to some of our weaker brethren . . . a piece of coxcombical affectation and of uncharitable presumption.'

[1] Heb. xi. 34 : ἐδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας.

[2] Potter was Bishop of Oxford (1715–1737), and Wesley received deacon's orders from him in 1725. His views of Church matters are exhibited in his volume on *Church Government*, which details the Anglican theory at length.

Gibson, who was Bishop of London (1723–1748), held such high views of Church authority that some constitutional lawyers said he wanted 'a sacerdotal empire' (*Biog. Dict.*).

Holy Spirit of God not only taught and moved upon apostles and early saints, but is a living power in the Church still. The Church theory to which he had been attached not only disparaged Scripture, but limited the Holy Spirit of God. But now he learned that this Divine Person not only condescended to teach Barnabas, Tertullian, Augustine, and Thomas à Kempis, but is teaching humble souls in every age. Wherever the truth as it is in Jesus is proclaimed and received, there the Holy Spirit acts directly upon believing hearts.[1] This blessed gift does not belong alone to the Church in its corporate capacity, but is secured to the individual soul. Therefore, every believer may have a divine assurance of the truth of his religion. 'He that believeth hath the witness in himself.'

Observe: this is not merely the same thing as the Protestant doctrine of 'private judgment.' That insists upon the right of every Christian to read Scripture, and to examine authorities for himself—a privilege belonging to the sociology of Protestantism. But there is no security for the truth in having the right to read the Bible, or to hold our own opinions. On the other hand, the Quakers and others had asserted the capacity of every believer to receive the Holy Spirit: but they had inclined too much towards Montanism. Each man's 'spirit' was made an infallible authority. The promise that 'they shall all be taught of God' was grasped without its necessary explanations and limitations. Our Lord gave the promise

[1] On this point, as on many others, Wesley's teaching was a revival of Paulinism. Usteri (*Entwickelung des Paulinischen Lehrbegriffes*, p. 283) and Kahnis are defective at this point. See Weiss, *Bib. Theol. N. T.*, i., 458. The question is, whether the Holy Spirit comes to men by the law, by 'man' = 'the flesh,' or by faith? Gal. iii. 1, 5; Eph. i. 13, ii. 20–22.

of the Holy Spirit, who should 'lead into all truth,' but also said that 'He shall not speak of Himself.' That is, He reveals no absolutely new doctrines either to the Church or to individual believers. He unfolds and applies the old. The Church of Rome has overlooked this limitation when she has coined new dogmas. To avoid the extreme of the mystic, who would make himself independent of all external teaching, the Churchman tries to seclude the Holy Spirit within the lines of Church ordinances. Irenæus (*Hær.*, iii., 24) was the first to suggest that the Spirit is treasured in the Church, and 'none are partakers of it who do not come into the Church.' Only 'where the Church is, there is the Spirit.' But Irenæus little foresaw what use others would make of such words. He had not so far advanced into the heresy of exclusiveness as some who came after him. Besides, it is not fair to take his words apart from the facts to which they referred. It was in opposition to Gnostics and other heretics, who subverted the very truth of Christianity, that he insisted upon the apostolical tradition. He would have shrunk in amazement from the theory that men could hold every truth essential to Christianity, could experience the renewing grace of the Spirit, glorify Christ in life and labour, and yet be denied a place in the Church itself. Therefore to his memorable and much-abused statement—that 'Where the Church is, there is the Spirit,' he adds the true antecedent of that correlative—'Where the Spirit is, there is the Church and all grace.' But soon Cyprian distinctly laid it down that the unity of life in the Holy Spirit was inseparably dependent on connection with the Church and the Bishop.[1]

[1] We may here refer to an article in the *Lond. Qu. Rev.*, April,

It is upon these two principles that our claim to be recognised as a part of the Church of Christ must repose—

First. We appeal to Scripture as the rule of faith and as the standard of Church order. Any writer, however ancient, or venerable, or worthy of our most respectful and loving attention, whose writings are not included in the sacred canon, we cannot recognise as demanding our submission. Infallibility belongs to God alone.

Second. We appeal to the work of the Spirit of God upon our own souls.

When Wesley announced the doctrine of the 'Witness of the Spirit,' many accused him of novelty and presumption.[1] But 'it is to be found, as every student of Church history knows, not only in the Holy Scriptures, but in the creeds and confessions of Christendom from the earliest times.'[2] This doctrine, which belongs not to us but to

1873, on the 'Romanist Doctrine of the Holy Ghost:' 'It is a perversion of history to make the descent of the Holy Ghost a descent upon the apostles alone, or upon the apostles pre-eminently. The Spirit Himself declares the contrary. The foundation of the Church was not an apostolate and clerical order. The Christian religion will never be truly represented upon earth until that primal error and widespread delusion has been altogether extirpated.' He also says: 'What is needed further is the right adjustment in Christian theology of the relations of the administrating Spirit to the means of grace, the word of Scripture, the sacraments and prayer.'

[1] 'This extraordinary man hath, in fact, laid claim to every apostolic gift and grace, and in as full a measure as they were possessed of old.' (*The Doctrine of Grace; or, The Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit*, by Wm. (Warburton), Bishop of Gloucester, 1763, p. 119.) Bennett's *Broken Unity*, p. 169, says: 'It is to suppose that every Christian of the present day is to have an outpouring of the Holy Ghost identical with that of Pentecost.'

[2] Fernley Lect. 1882, on *The Witness of the Spirit*, by Rev. R. N. Young. He proceeds to say: 'The great movement of the 18th century involved no new doctrinal departure. It was a recovery and re-assertion of forgotten truths—it was a revival of expiring life.' See also the first Fernley Lecture, by the Rev. Dr. Osborn, on *The Holy Spirit*.

evangelical Christianity everywhere, is ceasing to be our peculiar boast, because there is so great an increase in the number of those who have entered into the joy of conscious salvation. The opinion that every believer might hear and recognise the voice of God for himself, seemed new and strange to some in Wesley's days, as it seems strange to some now. Yet we do not pretend that because the Spirit enters the humblest heart, thereby any man is rendered infallible, or independent of instruction, or that the means of grace are no longer necessary to him.[1] Time would fail to show how earnestly Wesley contended against these possible exaggerations and perversions of truth so important, and, as we think, succeeded. No one dreaded more than he the irrational vacuities of mysticism. But here, he and we find sure footing. 'The Spirit of God beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' 'It is God that justifieth, who is he that shall condemn?' 'Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth.'

1 Kahnis (*Die Lehre vom heiligen Geiste*, p. 151) says: 'The Spirit of Christ, which comes upon faith, since it is the actual token of the covenant with Christ, is the security of the truth of the faith. The new life of the Holy Spirit is a life of the consciousness. This consciousness has the word of God as its fountain, and the Holy Spirit as its life-principle. It is therefore an objective, divine factor in it. Only it is developed through the human organ. So is it always subjectively human, and therefore capable of an erroneous reproduction of the objective word of God in the Holy Spirit. The expression of this Christian consciousness, of this inner word, is the Creed.' Even Pfleiderer (*Hibb. Lect.* 1885, p. 125) can say that: 'To the Jewish principle of authority and tradition Paul places in opposition the evangelical principle of the immediate assurance of divine truth felt in the soul through mysterious contact with the Divine Spirit which bears within itself the seal of its truth.'

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III.—See p. 48.

The Early Heresies.

We have not space for full evidence of the fact that the first heresies arose among the Jewish Christians. We may remark,

1. That the Ebionitic and Gnostic systems had a common origin.

2. That the point at which the Jewish Christians left the faith was at the doctrine of the cross. St. Paul gloried in the cross. The 'shame' of the cross led the Ebionites to the opinion that 'the Christ' did not really suffer. They said that the divine principle came upon Jesus at His baptism, but left Him at His crucifixion. It was only an apparent humiliation of the Messiah (δόκησις): 1 John iv. 3, v. 6. This docetism, in various forms, runs through all these heresies.

3. It is misleading to attribute Gnosticism, primarily, to oriental dualism (as Beausobre, Matter, Mansel, etc.). The weird forms, with which the 'fantastical genius of a Gnostic'[1] delighted to people the spiritual universe, have undergone careful scrutiny by recent writers, as Neander, Lipsius, Hilgenfeld, etc. Their full elucidation has not yet come. Almost every authority differs about the exact time and opinions of Cerinthus. The most satisfactory view regards him as 'a connecting link between Judaism and Gnosticism' (Neander, Lightfoot, etc.). But Basilides and Valentinus had a Jewish training. Marcion was the first who attempted to connect Paulinism with Gnosticism. The dualistic principle of the evil of matter was brought in to assist the Jewish thinker to justify his notion of the unreality both of the atonement and of the incarnation of the Son of God.

[1] Lechler, *Ap. Zeit.*, p. 213.

4. Consequently, those early writings which assert the reality of the death of Christ, are conspicuously Pauline in their impress. Such are the Epistles of Ignatius, Polycarp, and Barnabas. They began to find many types of the 'cross' in Scripture and in nature. The tree of life, Moses and Hur praying, the plough, the Roman insignia (Just. Mart.), the brazen serpent (Barn.), *aves volantes, homo natans vel orans, navis antenna* (Jerome), were all referred to. But in Hermas, the Clementines, the *Teaching*, there is a singular reticence on the subject.

In Ignat. *ad Rom.* occurs the expression, *Ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐστάυρωται, my love has been crucified* (see *Wesl. Hy.*, No. 28, 'My Lord, my Love is crucified'). The pseudo-Ignat. Epistles are strongly anti-docetic.

5. The 'sign of the cross,' which was common in baptism and on other occasions in Tertullian's time, was not probably ever in use among Jewish Christians. There are no proofs of its public use in Rome before the time of Constantine: *In hoc signo vinces.* Minuc. Felix (A.D. 250) said, *Cruces etiam nec colimus, nec optamus*: 'We do not worship crosses, nor do we desire them.' L'Abbé Martigny (*Dictionnaire des Antiquités Chrétiennes*, 1877) says: 'Les anciens Pères attestent que le signe de la croix est de tradition apostolique.' But this cannot be proved. Moreover, it is becoming more clear that among Jewish believers in Christ no such sign would be adopted. Possibly, it was accepted as the 'catholic' sign or badge, when it became 'sin to Judaize,' and when the 'Church' took the place of the 'synagogue.' Catholicism conquered formal Judaism, but received its spirit into itself.

CHAPTER IV.

APOSTOLICITY.

Περισσοτέρως ζηλωτὴς ὑπάρχων τῶν πατρικῶν μου παραδόσεων.[1]

'They are now at full liberty to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church.'[2]

'Upon reflection I saw how exactly we had copied after the primitive Church.'[3]

'THE Church of Christ is, by the admission of all parties, apostolical, or, derived in some manner from the apostles.'[4] All Christians—Romanist, Protestant, Presbyterian, and Congregational, believe that they are in the Apostolical Succession.[5] It is very important that we should examine Methodism by this test; and, whatever may be the result, it will at least be seen that its earlier and later promoters have made this the ideal towards which they have been striving.

Of course, we are met here by the question, What was the Apostolical Church? Or, even by a yet earlier question, What is Christianity? But to discuss these

[1] Gal. i. 14.

[2] Wesley's letter to Dr. Coke on *American Methodism*, Sept., 1784.

[3] Wesley's *Plain Account*, 1749, p. 21.

[4] Palmer's *Book of the Church*, i., p. 172.

[5] Dr. R. W. Dale, in his *Congregational Principles*, says that 'it is not enough to prove that the Apostolic Churches were congregational,' but proceeds to show that 'this is the highest and most natural organization.' His principal instances are, however, from the apostolic age.

questions in the briefest manner would be far beyond our present limits. We must be content with noticing them only as they are related to our theme.

The principal theories concerning the apostolicity of the Church, are, after all, only two. First, that which asserts that all Churches, which follow the doctrine, and cultivate the spirit of apostles, are apostolical.[1] Second, that which holds that apostolicity in the Church includes, not only similarity of doctrine, and resemblance in spirit and life, but also a formal, historical connection of direct descent, securing a positive identity of Church government, usages and offices.

We admit that it is quite incumbent upon us to decide which of these two theories we accept. We do not underrate the difficulties or the importance of the decision. But has not the problem been solved for us, by the course of events, and by the hand of Providence? We have not so much to justify our procedure as to show how we have been led.

And we are reminded that such a position as ours is not a novel one. History repeats itself. Similar circumstances surrounded the first Protestants. Luther and Calvin protested that they forsook nothing truly apostolical: their opponents insisted that they had left everything. Nay, the prototype of early Protestantism, and of early Methodism, is in the early Church itself. Problems almost exactly analogous to those which are involved under the terms 'apostolical succession,' 'priestly ordination,' and the 'unity of the Church,' were, under other names, the topics of the most fervent controversy. There are many most

[1] This is Tertullian's view.

interesting points of correspondence in the histories of the first Christians and of the Methodists, some of which have often been noticed.

1. The original representatives of each system were, at first, attached to an older form of piety, which claimed divine authorization.[1]

2. By the 'logic of events' both were compelled to modify their respective systems—to recognise the demand for more comprehensive freedom. Concessions had to be made to Hellenists by the appointment of the 'Seven,' to Gentiles in the case of Cornelius, and again at the Council of Jerusalem. How far these concessions went may be inferred from the fact that, in the extant writings of the original twelve apostles, there is nothing said in favour of the observance of the ancient law or ritual. In Wesley's case progress was marked by his employment of class-leaders and lay-preachers, in the building of separate places for meeting and worship, in the establishment of the Conference, and, finally, in the ordination of ministers for America and Scotland.

3. Other Christians soon advanced beyond the position which was held at first by the twelve apostles. Stephen proclaimed the independence of Christianity, and Paul established Churches entirely free from Judaism. Similarly, the Methodists have applied the principles handed down to

[1] Some Episcopalians at least from the beginning have claimed divine right for their system, from Ignatius (*Ep. ad Trall.*, 'Apart from these there is no Church')—down to Canon Liddon. The latter says (*Serm.*, April 25, 1885): 'The Episcopate is organically necessary to the structure of the visible body of Christ—necessary, not merely to its *bene esse*, but to its *esse*.' But see Prof. Hatch's reply in the *Contemp. Rev.*, June, 1885; Lightfoot on *Phil.*, p. 189; Powell's *Apostolical Succession*.

them. They have ceased to look for instruction to the ministry of the older Church, and the 'temple worship,' which their fathers observed, they no longer need, because they have ordinances of their own.

4. We scarcely wish to delay over the parallel between the exclusiveness which in the first age drove Christians from the synagogues, precipitating the final separation of Christianity from Judaism, and that which thrust out Wesley and his people from the churches of this country.

We need not pursue this parallelism further, nor carry it to lengths of affectation. Other features of it will occur as we proceed. But we have been compelled to inquire whether the ground we occupy is 'covenant ground;' and it is no little consolation to us, in the face of reproach, that the same things have happened to those who have gone before us. Besides, our Church theory has been with us only a matter of secondary consideration. It has been evolved out of history and life. We have not very diligently studied 'Church principles.' We have never boasted a single 'ecclesiastical chair.' Occasionally, stern necessity has constrained us to enquiry or to controversy.[1] But perhaps few Wesleyan ministers have studied Church questions so carefully as Wesley himself did.

In the surviving traces of Wesley's studies in Church

[1] We refer again to the Rev. T. Powell's book on *Apostolical Succession* (1840)—a reply to Dr. Hook's assumptions. This book deserves to be better known. See also Jackson's Letter to Dr. Pusey, 1842. Pusey, in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, had charged Methodists with teaching 'justification by feeling.' It was in this letter that Pusey repeated the libel upon Dr. Coke. Mr. Jackson, in his Centenary Sermon (1839), says: 'The true apostolical succession is a succession to a ministry which is characterized by apostolic truth and faithfulness, by apostolical efficiency and power, by apostolical labour and self-denial, and by apostolical success.'

history we can discern a strong desire to discover not only the doctrine of the apostles, but also their spirit and practice. It was on this account that the Oxford Methodists resorted to frequent communion and fasting, and to united prayer and Scripture reading.[1] They also diligently read the writings of the 'Fathers.' In Frederica (Nov., 1736), Wesley read among his friends extracts from Ephrem Syrus, whom he calls 'the most awakening writer of all the ancients.' Again, in England (March, 1746), he says: 'I spent some hours in reading the *Exhortations* of Eph. Syrus. Surely never did any man since David give such a picture of a broken and contrite heart.'[2] He also notices Ignatius, Eusebius, and others. Turretin's *History of the Church* he thought to be a 'dry, heavy, barren treatise.' Of Dr. Cave's *History of the Primitive Church* he said: 'What pity that so great learning and piety should be accompanied with so little judgment!'[3] The reading, A.D. 1730, of *The Character of a Perfect Christian*, by Clement of Alexandria, excited for it so much admiration, that in after days he tried to draw such a picture in *The Character of a Methodist*.[4]

One of Wesley's most serious efforts in ecclesiastical reading was a thorough examination of Beveridge's *Pandectæ Canonum Conciliorum*. His final verdict was, 'Nothing could so convince us that both general and particular

[1] Acts ii. 42.

[2] So Roediger in Herzog, *Real-Enkyk.*: 'His words reach the heart.'

[3] 'The sketches of Cave, while characterized by the marked individuality of the writer, by an earnest desire for truth, and by extraordinary erudition, contain such a curious jumble of stories, credible and incredible, that no dependence can be placed on them.' (Donaldson, *Apost. Fathers*, p. 40.)

[4] Newman relates (*Apolog.*, p. 26) how he was himself charmed with the philosophical mysticism of the Alexandrian Clement.

Councils may err and have erred.'[1] He further admits that of that extraordinary document called the *Apostolical Canons* he had 'once thought more highly than he ought.' Bishop Beveridge, an editor and defender of these compositions, was one of the most learned and spiritual bishops of the English Church, but unfortunately devoted to the doctrine of the Apostolical Succession.[2] His eager passion for 'catholic unity,' based upon episcopacy and sacerdotalism, led him to maintain the essential integrity of the *Apostolical Constitutions* and *Canons*. In his day it was known that the writings of Church fathers had been extensively corrupted in the interests of the Papacy. The *Isidore Decretals* had been forged in the ninth century, pretending to have come down from the early popes. They were denounced by Wickliffe as apocryphal; and were so thoroughly exposed at length, that even Bellarmine and Baronius ceased to defend them.[3] Upon forgeries of this kind sacerdotalism raised its triumphant head in the Middle Ages. Dr. Pusey only mentions a melancholy fact when he says, 'The system built on the forgery abides still.'[4] Wesley himself remarks on the Romish controversy: 'I cannot trust any of their quotations without consulting every sentence in the original, and the originals themselves can very hardly be trusted.'[5] Here

[1] *Journal*, Sept., 1736.

[2] It was to him that Bishop Tillotson addressed the often quoted words: 'Doctor, charity is above rubrics.' (Abbey and Overton, *Eng. Ch.*, i., 126.) It ought to be said in excuse for these errors in pious men of that time, like Beveridge, that they had not before them the things which belong to the subsequent history of the Church of Christ.

[3] So Nirschl (Rom. Cath.), *Lehrbuch*, p. 17. We are glad to refer to Dr. Littledale's *Plain Reasons*, p. 123. See Gieseler, *Ecc. Hist.*, ii., 335.

[4] *Eirenicon*, i., 255.

[5] *Journ.*, Aug., 1739.

he refers particularly to passages in Cyprian; but it is well known that passages in Ignatius, Irenæus, and Tertullian had been introduced with the same object. Even St. Augustine was made to say what he never did say: 'Roma locuta est; causa finita est.' With the detection and exposure of these dreadful falsehoods, many of the bulwarks of Episcopacy had gone down also. But the *Apostolical Canons* remained; and they exalted episcopacy without any complicity with Rome. Beveridge thought them exactly suited to the Anglican theory.

The Bishop indicates his Protestantism by replying to the Jesuit Turrian, who had alleged that 'the *Canons* had all been made at the Council of Jerusalem by the apostles.' He also defends Episcopacy by replying to the French Protestant Daillé, who attributed the *Canons* to a forger in the fifth century. In his preface, addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Beveridge says that his work is to prove the English Church to be the same as the primitive Church.[1] 'They differ only in time. They have the same faith, the same number of sacraments, the same laws, rites, feasts, and fasts; and indeed the Anglican Church is the primitive Church revived.' The enemies of the Church were, however, intent on despoiling it of its honours as the apostolic system. This they would never do so long as 'the genuine monuments of the primitive martyrs and Fathers were preserved intact.' Among these infallible witnesses he reckons the *Canons*. He says that the apostles were inspired to form the Church. They left it to their successors, by whom the uncorrupted

[1] See the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiæ Primitivæ, vindicatus et illustratus.* Lond., 1679. (*Ang. Cath. Lib.: Bev. Works*, vol. xii.)

faith and discipline have been handed down. This discipline is contained in the *Canons*, which 'no one doubted before our age, and which were sanctioned and edited before the Council of Nice.' Yet he is compelled to allow that they were not written by the apostles, in whose names they speak.[1]

The Church of Rome does not think very highly of these *Canons*, because they say nothing of the Papacy.[2] On this very account they have been prized by the Eastern Church, and by Anglicans. It is doubtful whether they were known to the Ante-Nicene Church, or to the Council of Nice. The *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, recently brought into notice, contains the essence of the seventh book of the *Constitutions*.[3] It is probable that references in Eusebius and other writers to *Teachings* and *Ordinances* of apostles were really made to these singular and more ancient documents; though Church writers have claimed such references for the *Constitutions* and *Canons*.[4] The *Constitutions* are indeed less trustworthy than the *Canons*, if that were possible. Even Dr. Hook allows that 'the advancement of episcopal dignity and power appears to have been the chief design of the forgery.'[5] Bishop Wordsworth, as with a sigh, allows that they are not authentic.[6] Bishop Pearson places them in

[1] 'Their apostolicalness is by the learned Daillé everlastingly shattered and broken.' (Cave, *Prim. Ch.: Pref.*)

[2] Romish writers do not rely so much upon the authority of bishops as the Anglicans. Their interest concentres on the Papacy.

[3] See articles in the *Meth. Mag.*, April and May, 1885, by the Rev. J. R. Gregory. Also this Lecture, *infra*.

[4] Canon Westcott thinks the 'original elements of the Clementines, the *Apost. Canons and Const.*' existed before the middle of the 2nd century. (*Canon*, p. 11.)

[5] *Church Dictionary.* [6] *Ch. Hist.*, i., 413.

the fifth century, and Archbishop Usher places them in the sixth; while both suspect from the use of similar language that 'the same falsifier has been at work on them who expanded the shorter Ignatian Epistles into the longer.'[1] But what shall we say of the Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, W. Whiston, who in A.D. 1711 published five volumes on *Primitive Christianity?* In his preface to this work, addressed to Queen Anne, he says of the '*Constitutions* of the Holy Apostles' that 'they are the unerring rule of that Christian faith whereof Her Majesty is the glorious defender;' and in the third volume of the same work he declares that 'these are the most canonical books of the New Testament, delivered on Mount Zion, whence the new law was to issue, according to prophecy.' Afterwards, however, he is said to have changed his opinion of them.[2]

We are not surprised, therefore, that Wesley attentively studied documents so pretentious, nor that he arose dissatisfied with the results. His early High Church proclivities gradually yielded to a very wide eclecticism on ecclesiastical questions. He saw what uncertainty prevailed on critical points, through the corruption of the very sources of the history, and through the perversion of the best of men by party interest. Even of the saintly Bishop of Hippo he says: 'When Augustine's passions were heated, his word was not worth a rush.'[3] He began to doubt many things which had been said against Montanus, Pelagius, and other heretics. Since he found no ecclesias-

[1] Smith and Cheetham, *Dict. of Ch. Ant.*, i., 119.

[2] Whiston might have been drawn to them on account of their unevangelical character. He was an Arian.

[1] *Sermons*, No. 68.

tical history in England except that of Archdeacon Echard—which was 'so exceedingly dull that any one can hardly read it without falling asleep,' he was not ashamed, for the benefit of his people, to adapt the history of Mosheim.[1] This book, published within ten years of Wesley's death, may be supposed to contain his riper views on Church questions.

He had not much patience with Mosheim's careful discussion of the ancient heresies—the best up to his time, because he thought these were the 'whims and absurdities of senseless and conceited men . . . not worth our while to collect into one heap all the rubbish of 1700 years.' This was not, perhaps, philosophic impartiality, but it was in harmony with his practical earnestness. He criticises Mosheim's carefulness in tracing the history of rites and customs and in overlooking the 'internal state of the Church.' But Neander was not born until two years before the death of Wesley. Wesley helped to prepare the Church for a higher conception of Church history than Mosheim possessed. Yet he says: 'I do not find proof that Dr. M., though learned, was acquainted with inward religion,—but he is on the whole one of the best writers upon the subject.'

It is an effectual reply to any who speak of Wesley's

[1] *A Concise Ecclesiastical History from the Birth of Christ to the Present Century*, 4 vols., by J. Wesley. (Published by Paramore, at the Foundry, 1781.) Among other great obligations which the Methodists owe to the wisdom and learning of Wesley, was his *Notes on the New Testament*, in which he embodied the criticism and exegesis of Bengel's *Gnomon*, the best book in hermeneutics of that age, and not yet superseded. Mosheim's was also the best book on its subject in Wesley's day, and has not yet lost its value. Protestantism owes much to the accurate learning and studious moderation of this Presbyterian writer.

'ritualism' and the like, that he accepts Mosheim's statement, that 'neither Christ nor apostles command anything expressly concerning the external form of the Church.' The first Christians, he says, were in a position of perfect equality, saluted each other as brethren and sisters. A presbyter ruled each congregation, who was sometimes called the 'Angel,' but was afterwards distinguished by the name of Bishop. On these points he seldom departs from the statements of the Lutheran author.

In this work, also, Wesley expresses a doubt whether Montanus deserved the name of heretic, and whether the accusations usually made against him are correct. Suspicions which he had before entertained upon this point were confirmed by reading 'an old book, *The General Delusion of Christians with regard to Prophecy.*'[1] Thirty years later he says in the *History* (p. 114): 'I have frequently been in doubt whether he [Montanus] was not one of the wisest and holiest men who was then in the Christian Church.'

Later enquiry does not confirm Wesley's conjectures respecting Montanus. But, except the *Philosophoumena* of Hippolytus, we have only the testimonies of Tertullian, of Eusebius (*H. E.*, vi., 16–20), of Epiphanius (*Cont. Hæret.* 48) on the subject, and these Wesley had. It is allowed that the Montanists were not, technically, heretics, since they did not deny any article of the creed. Their errors inclined them to spiritual excesses, and in this way they present the antithesis to the Gnostics who bore Christianity away in high intellectual notions. Montanism also was opposed to sacerdotal theories, and maintained the claim of

[1] *Journ.*, Aug., 1750.

the spiritual man to ascendency in the Church. It was a reaction in favour of the *charismata* of the primitive age, which were now lost in the mechanism of a Church system. Possibly it deserves the censure of Pressensé, that it 'refused to recognise any other type of Christianity than that of the upper chamber at Jerusalem.'[1] It certainly wandered if it asserted 'that the economy of the Paraclete which began at Pentecost culminated in the prophetesses of Phrygia.' Its exhortations to fasting and martyrdom, with its severe views of life and its claim to special 'gifts of the Spirit,' were as offensive to Churchmen as were the pretensions of the Methodists. Bishop Warburton, in his *Doctrine of Grace*, might have been writing against a Montanist.

Mr. Urlin states that Wesley fixed upon the time of Cyprian as presenting the best picture of the undivided and primitive Church, and 'took this as the model for imitation whenever he judged it necessary to supplement the system of his own Church.' But we see no proof of this. Wesley, especially in the later part of his career, looked higher than the Bishop of Carthage for his example of apostolicity. He was forty-two years of age before he became satisfied that modern Episcopacy was not an apostolical institution.[2] In his early life in America his ritualistic austerities made his life miserable, and his ministry powerless. In 1756 he republished a tract on *Baptism* which his father had written, and which plainly

[1] *Early Years of Christianity*, iii., 107.

[2] By reading *An Enquiry into the Constitution and Discipline, Unity and Worship of the Primitive Church, that flourished within the first three hundred Years after Christ, faithfully collected out of the extant Writings of those Ages by an impartial Hand* [Lord Chancellor King], 1713.

taught baptismal regeneration. Through life, as we know, he declined to leave the Church, or to permit his preachers to administer the sacraments.

The traces of this regard for Church order, and for the primitive forms especially, are impressed upon every part of our system. The 'Agapæ,' or love-feasts, which gradually ceased in the post-apostolic Church, and were replaced by the more formal participation of the Lord's Supper, he recommenced. Here there burst forth a stream of testimony to the work of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of living men which we may believe and pray will never cease. Who can estimate the loss to the Church in past ages, through the absence of opportunities for the free and mutual declaration of religious conviction and feeling? Who can doubt that the modern quickening of spiritual life in all the Churches is largely owing to the revival of this primitive custom of 'fellowship' among believers? A reference to commentators will show that something had been lost out of the Church which had made it impossible to understand what the apostolic *κοινωνία* or *fellowship* was.[1] The original members of the Church were instructed that they were under obligation to edify and encourage one another in frequent mutual intercourse. They were to 'exhort one another day by day.'[2] The 'whole Church'

[1] 'Am schwierigsten ist *κοινωνία*,' says Lechler, *Apost. Zeit.* (p. 285): but he is not content to limit it to mere breaking of bread, or to community of goods. Wordsworth only sees in it 'visible communion with the Apostles;' Meyer (on Acts ii. 42), 'mutual brotherly association.' The Vulgate, 'perseverantes in doctrina apostolorum, et communicatione fractionis panis, et orationibus,' changed the face of the original. Bengel has, 'in the communion of all good things external and internal, of actions and counsels.' For fuller exposition see Dr. Gregory's Lecture, p. 74 f., who also elucidates the history of the love-feast.

[2] Heb. iii. 13. 'The first disciples apparently united every day the Agape

should be 'assembled together' for this purpose. 'Each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation;' but 'all things are done unto edifying.'[1] In what other way can the gifts bestowed upon every member of the Church be more effectively exercised to the glory of God? 'To each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit [in order] to profit withal.'[2]

There were also other forms and services which Wesley observed to have been in use in the early Church, but long suspended, which he brought back for the benefit of his people. The ancient vigils, or watch-nights, had been observed among the Moravians. The 'quarterly tickets' of membership in the Society were intended to be certificates of character: 'These tickets (the *Σύμβολα* or Tessarae), as the ancients called them, being of just the same force with *ἐπιστολαὶ συστατικαί*, or *commendatory epistles*, mentioned by the apostle.'[3]

with the Eucharist.' (Dr. Plumptre in Smith's *Bib. Dict.* on 'Lord's Supper.') Cf. 1 Thess. v. 11, 'Exhort (*παρακαλεῖτε*) one another, and build each other up, even as ye do' (*καθὼς καὶ ποιεῖτε*).' Lünemann misses the force of the *present*, when he interprets: 'a laudatory recognition that the edification had already begun with the readers.' The same duty is urged in Eph. iv. 1–16; Col. iii. 16. Heb. x. 24, 25 reminds us of the connection between the 'love,' which gave its name to the 'Agape,' and 'good works,' *κατανοῶμεν ἀλλήλους εἰς παροξυσμὸν ἀγάπης κ. καλῶν ἔργων*, and the gathering of Christians. The *ἐπισυναγωγή*, Bengel remarks, means that they should not only 'attend the synagogue as Jews, but also the additional synagogue as Christians. Nor is this simply gathering into one place, but mutual and loving aggregation.'

'Perhaps their mode of life, in its form and habit, was not very unlike the *Unitas Fratrum*, or the modern Methodists.'—Paley's *Evidences*, i., 1.

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

[2] 1 Cor. xii. 7. That is, not for the 'profit' of the recipient only, but for the profit of the whole Church. On *πρός*=*in order to*, comp. 1 Cor. vi. 5, vii. 35, x. 11.

[3] *Plain Account*, 1749 (p. 27).

But though Wesley was so deeply attached to the forms of the ancient Church, and desired so earnestly to reproduce and perpetuate them among his followers, he never imagined that by external forms or practices a Church could be made truly apostolical. After middle life he never held the view that the Holy Spirit of God was confined to Church ordinances, or to a ministry descended by episcopal succession from the apostles. But this is the Romish and high Anglican theory ;[1] and we must give it a moment's consideration.

As we have already said, all Christian Churches are, in some sense, 'descended from the apostles.' Dr. Gregory says : 'There is not a Nonconformist Church in this country but can trace historically back to the ministry of St. Peter.'[2] But the episcopalian claim is that the apostolical Church was handed over by the apostles to bishops, and by them to their successors, who alone had the power to convey Christian grace to the members thereof. This grace is conveyed by the sacraments.

We need not say that this is the confessed teaching of Rome. Dr. J. A. Möhler, a distinguished Roman Catholic of Germany, says: 'The unity of believers is realized in the Lord's Supper. There they are made one body . . . The true faith, the true Christian confession is also conditioned, according to the teaching of the oldest Church, through the Holy Spirit and the impartation of the same through the connection with the Church.'[3]

[1] 'None but the Bishop can unite us to the Father and the Son,' said Dodwell in his *One Altar*, etc., p. 387. 'The only ministrations to which Christ has promised His presence is to those of the Bishops and the other clergy acting under their sanction,' said Dr. Hook, *Two Sermons*.

[2] Fernley Lecture, p. 164.

[3] *Die Einheit in der Kirche*, von J. A. Möhler, 1825 (pp. 3 and 11).

'You wish to know,' says Dr. J. H. Newman, 'whether the establishment is what you began by assuming it to be,—the grace-giving Church of God.'[1] 'The very idea of a catholic Church, as an instrument of supernatural grace, is that of an institution which innovates or rather superadds to nature.'[2] Potter, the Bishop of Oxford, from whom Wesley received Deacon's and Priest's orders (afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury), puts the case most plainly in his book, *A Discourse on Church Government*.[3] He says of Paul that 'in opposition to schismatics he proves himself to be an apostle, both in the general sense of that name, and particularly as he had been sent to preach the gospel to them: "Am I not an apostle? If I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you whom I have converted and on whom I have conferred the gifts of the Holy Spirit."' Again: 'And thus he seems to have done at Ephesus, where his preaching to twelve disciples who had received John's baptism, and his conferring on them the gifts of the Spirit, are expressly mentioned.' Yet more explicitly he adds: 'This naturally leads us to another prerogative which belonged to our Lord, and afterwards to the apostles, namely, the power of giving the Holy Ghost.'[4] Pearson, on *The Creed*, says: 'Catholicism consisteth in

[1] *Difficulties of Anglicans*, i., 166. [2] *Ibid.*, i., 300.

[3] Third edition, 1724, pp. 69, 72. C. Wesley thought highly of this work in his earlier life: 'April, 1739.—I began Potter on *Church Government* . . . a seasonable antidote against the growing spirit of delusion.' (*Journal.*)

[4] Bishop Jeremy Taylor had said in his *Episcopacy Asserted:* 'To the apostles he gave a plenitude of power . . . by virtue of it, they received a power of giving the Holy Ghost in confirmation, and of giving His grace in the collation of holy orders. . . . Episcopacy is not only a divine institution, but the only order that derives immediately from Christ.'

universality—as curing all diseases, and planting all graces in the souls of men.' We can only wonder that with such instructors the Wesleys became evangelical at all. It is hard for us to estimate the difficulties which lay in their way to freedom.

Cyprian and Augustine were the authorities who finally set up this unscriptural theory. They asserted, as Dr. Gregory says, that *the Church had the Holy Spirit in her hands.* But their way was prepared by some who had gone before. Ignatius had said: 'Except a man be within the altar, he cannot have the bread of God.' The distinction between the clergy and the laity made by Clement, and the saying of Irenæus that 'where the Church of God is, there is the Spirit,'[1] were soon reduced to the narrowest meaning possible. By the end of the second century there were few who would not receive the doctrine attributed to Ignatius, 'Without these [Bishop, Presbyter and Deacon] the Church is not called.'[2] Soon it was orthodox to say with Origen, *Extra hanc domum, id est, extra ecclesiam, nemo salvatur;* or, with Cyprian, *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus.*

We have only space for one or two testimonies that the same doctrines are now held and taught in the Church of England. We need not add that the tenacity with which these views are held, is the chief hindrance to a closer unity among the English Churches. The Nonconformist Churches, while claiming liberty for their own forms of worship and Church order, do not unchristianize one another. It is the Episcopalian alone who insists that his 'orders' have the sanction of Christ and the apostles,

[1] *Hær.*, iii., 24. [2] *Ad Trall.*, c. 3.

and that there is no grace of salvation promised to any other. The question between the Churchman and the Nonconformist differs specifically from any separating Protestant Nonconformists from each other. The latter are such as may be solved in practice: the former lies too deep for this process.

Dr. Browne,[1] Bishop of Winchester,—who is not regarded as a man of extreme views,—thus speaks of the 'notes of the Church:' 'Its unity depends on unity of foundation, unity of faith, unity of baptism, unity of discipline, unity of communion. Its holiness springs from the presence of Christ, the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, the graces conferred upon its members by partaking of its sacraments, and living in its communion. Its apostolicity results from its being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, continuing in the doctrine and fellowship of the apostles, holding the faith of the apostles, governed and ministered to by a clergy deriving their succession from the apostles.' There is scarcely any of these qualifications which any true Nonconformist minister could not fully accept. But it is clear from Dr. Browne's explanations of them that he intends to exclude their application to any Churches not under episcopalian direction. He would not deny their application to the Romish Church; but in the English Nonconformist Churches he would decline to recognise them.

The famous Dr. Hook said: 'The apostolical succession of the ministry is essential to the right administration of

[1] *Thirty-Nine Articles*, 1878, p. 449. Dr. Browne quotes Cyprian and others on 'Unity,' without a word of caution. His statements on Baptism, p. 614, are very confused.

the Holy Sacraments.' That is: No other persons but those in this 'succession' can secure grace in the Sacraments; no others have the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was a gift bestowed upon the apostles. As Bishop Potter says, the apostles 'conferred it' upon their converts, and then handed it down to their successors in the ministry. And those who are in this 'succession' alone have the Holy Spirit to dispense in baptism, to impart in confirmation, and in ordination. As Canon Liddon has it, 'the apostles had the power to *transmit the ministry*.'[1] This is a claim not merely to an authority to call men out to preach, or to serve the Church, but to convey to them the spiritual gifts which will alone make their ministry and priesthood effective. Therefore, Dr. Hook is careful to say that 'the clergy of the Church of England can trace their connexion with the apostles by links not one of which is wanting from the times of St. Paul and St. Peter to our own.' It is of course important to be secure of the 'succession,' if only those who can trace it from the apostles to themselves possess true ministerial power, or, in other words, have the Holy Spirit. Of what use would the 'succession' be without the spiritual endowment? The Vice-President of Cuddesdon College says: 'The gift of the Spirit is the unifying principle, but the gift of the Spirit is dependent on the laying on of apostolic hands, and therefore can exist in its covenanted fulness only where the apostolic organization abides. The Spirit has its "body of earth," nor where the body is not, can the Spirit be expected.'[2]

[1] Liddon's *Sermon on the Consecration of the Bishops of Lincoln and Exeter*, April, 1885.

[2] Gore's Reply to Hatch's Bampton Lecture, 1882. It is worthy of

On this theory of sacramental grace, and ministerial right, and exclusive spiritual prerogatives, so stubbornly maintained, yet, as we think, so unscriptural in its character, and so injurious to true catholicism, we must say a few words.

1. How degrading is this view of God's Holy Spirit! Is not the Holy Spirit divine? Is He not God? Is He not the third Person in the ever-blessed Trinity? And, can man give God to man? Does God put Himself into the hands of a human priest, that He may be distributed among men?[1] There are those who believe that the prayers of a priest can 'extend the Incarnation'—can transmute sacramental bread and wine into the very Body and Blood of Christ. They hold this, although the Scriptures teach that the humiliation of our Lord is at an end, and that His Body is in heaven. They may also imagine that the Holy Ghost, in all His personal dignity and glory, has placed Himself at the disposal of a human priesthood. But will not some be convinced that thus to think of the Divine Spirit—as a grace or influence which men may transmit—is to degrade a great truth?

remark that the sentence, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost,' was not used in the ordination service of the Church for many centuries after the apostles.

[1] See an excellent article in the *London Quarterly Review*, April, 1869, on Bishop Moberly's Bampton Lecture on *The Holy Spirit*. Bishop Moberly's work is saturated with the doctrine that the Church (apostles and their successors) distributes the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Only the 'twelve' received the gift at Pentecost. By this theory, the writer of the article well shows 'the Personality of the Holy Ghost is lost.'

No appeal can be made to the linguistic rule of the New Testament, which generally uses the article when the Holy Spirit is spoken of as a Person: τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. See Acts viii. 18 (R. V., not Weste.), x. 44, xix. 6, where the *gift* of the Spirit is connected with the prayers and instrumentality of the apostles.

Down to Wesley's days, and even to our own, there has been very little attention paid by theologians to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. This neglect has been the cause of enormous errors in the English and German Churches, as well as in the older Church of Rome. An Anglican writer has recently said that 'The theology of the third Person is a department of sacred science in which the Church of England is confessedly weak.'[1] Dr. Pope says: 'Indistinctness has prevailed on this subject in much of the theology of earlier and later times. The offices of the Holy Ghost have

[1] Rev. A. Gurney in *The Church the Habitation of the Holy Ghost* (Rivingtons, 1882).

A small book is published by the C. K. Society, entitled *The Nature and Office of the Holy Ghost*, by the Rev. S. C. Austen, M.A. It is chiefly occupied with the exhibition of the Deity and Personality of the Spirit. Mr. A. limits the Pentecostal gift to the 'twelve.' The following gives his view of sanctification:—'He (the Holy Spirit) joins us to the human nature of God the Word, that through it as by a ladder we may have access unto the Father.' 'Our first reception, therefore, of the Holy Spirit is in Baptism,' and 'the Eucharist is the great means by which we are most closely united to the holy and pure humanity of our Blessed Lord.' 'It is by the present existence of Christ's holy humanity, in personal union with Deity, that man's sanctification is effected.' Such a view agrees better with the Romish view of sanctification through sacraments, than with the evangelical and scriptural view of sanctification through the *Word* received by intelligent faith. The sacraments exhibit that Word, but cannot displace it. We are reminded of Wesley's remark in a letter to his mother: 'We cannot allow Christ's human nature to be present in the sacrament without transubstantiation, or something like it.' (Tyerman's *Life of Rev. J. Wesley*, i., 82.)

Of the clergy Mr. Austen says (p. 93): 'They have also given to them power to put in motion certain supernatural influences in the Church. Whence the absolution pronounced by the priest is effectual, for God is working by him . . . But, above all, he has received power to consecrate the Holy Eucharist. By general consent of the Church this has ever been confined to priestly hands. This was a point on which J. Wesley strongly insisted, although in this as in many matters his followers differ greatly from their master.'

Mr. Austen also states that 'the Wesleyan notion of the Spirit's working makes His presence to depend too often upon the physical constitution and natural temperament of the man.' *Verb. sap. suff.*

been obscured by exaggerations of sacramental efficacy; and His personal relation to the believer has been undervalued in many systems.'[1] One of the few English writers on the 'Doctrine of the Holy Spirit'[2] bears the following testimony: 'Germany seems to have abandoned this whole field, as if it were no longer worthy of cultivation. There is not a single work in the whole compass of German literature on the office and work of the Holy Spirit, if we except the unfinished work of Kahnis.'[3] This neglect he traces to the dominant Sabellianism, to 'the utterly misplaced importance attached to the sacraments, which has produced scarcely less calamitous results, notwithstanding the evangelical preaching which prevails in Germany, than the same error has caused in the Church of Rome.'[4] Here is evidently a weak place in Protestant theology. Many of the Churches have not even been able to interpret the mighty signs of this century which have displayed the action of the Spirit of God in all parts of the world. No Peter has stood up amongst them to point to the Pentecostal tokens visible on every side, and to say: 'This is that which hath been spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall be in the last

[1] *Compendium*, ii., 525: also notes xvii., xviii. in his *Fernl. Lect.* See remarks in *Wesl. Serm.* xi. on the paucity of writings on 'The Witness of the Spirit.'

[2] Smeaton on *The Holy Spirit*, p. 356.

[3] *Die Lehre vom heiligen Geiste*, von K. A. Kahnis, erster Theil, 1847. The second volume was never published. Kahnis was brought from rationalism to orthodoxy. But he follows the Lutheran doctrine of the sacraments.

[4] Smeaton further says that 'The Lutheran Church, to maintain her peculiar views of the Lord's Supper, is compelled to lay emphasis on the alleged ubiquity of Christ's humanity. But by so doing they evacuate the Spirit's work in that proportion.' The Germans seem to regard the Holy Spirit as the 'Spirit of the Church.' This accounts for the falling off in other respects of the Church which Luther founded.

days, saith God, I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: yea, and on My servants and on My handmaidens in those days will I pour forth of My Spirit, and they shall prophesy.'[1] They have imagined that the free and universal Spirit of God could be contained in institutions, creeds, formulas, and rites. They have 'changed the glory of the incorruptible God' the Spirit into the property of man. Some have even dreamed, like Simon Magus, that this 'gift of God' could be gained by money.

2. This theory that the apostles, and their alleged successors the bishops, had alone the power to 'transmit the ministry,' confuses two things which differ. Authority to call out ministers, to appoint elders to churches, is one thing: the spiritual endowment by which men are qualified to fulfil the ministry is another. No one disputes that apostles had, within proper limits, the first. But what we deny is that they could, by laying on of hands, communicate the second. But Church writers regularly confound these two things. Bishop Pearson, whose article on the Holy Ghost, in his book on *The Creed*, is full of argument on the Personality and Divinity of the Spirit, fails at this point: 'The same Spirit which illuminated the apostles, and endued them with power from above to perform personally their apostolical functions, fitted them also for the ordination of others, and the committing of a

[1] 'Dr. Gibson, late Lord Bishop of London, in one of his charges, flatly denies that God has wrought any "extraordinary work" in our nation; nay, affirms that to imagine any such thing is no better than downright enthusiasm.' (*Wesl. Serm.* on laying the foundation of City Road Chapel, April 21, 1777.)

standing power to a successive ministry unto the end of the world.' This 'standing power' means, of course, both authority to employ others in the ministry, and to convey to them the gift of the Spirit. The Spirit, which came directly upon the first believers, now only comes indirectly through bishops.[1]

3. The Scriptures do not support the view that men, however holy or dignified, can confer the Holy Spirit upon their fellow-men. The gift of the Spirit is always spoken of as the act of God. The Old Testament tells us that men were set apart for special duties, because the Spirit of God was found in them.[2] John the Baptist was 'filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb.' The Spirit descended at Pentecost, without human mediation, in answer to prayer. 'All' the disciples, male and female, as well as apostles, were filled with the Holy Spirit. What can be further from the genius of the New Testament than to make the Holy Spirit, now freed from the ritual formalities of Judaism, dependent upon new rites or on a new priesthood? Is this the freedom of which our Lord spoke to Nicodemus, when He said of this breath of heaven—no more to be controlled by man than the grand movements of the physical atmosphere: 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth'? Of the Galatians (iii. 2) Paul asks: 'This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?' Stephen and his six brethren were chosen to attend to the ministration of the

[1] Cf. John iv. 14; Rom. v. 5; Gal. iii. 2.
[2] Joseph, Gen. xli. 38; Bezaleel, Ex. xxxi. 3.

poor, because they were 'full of the Spirit and of wisdom.'[1] The 'laying-on of hands' (Acts vi. 6) was, as is all true ordination, the Church's recognition of a divine gift, including prayer for its confirmation and increase. The case of the Samaritans (Acts viii. 18), which is usually cited in proof that the apostles 'conferred the Holy Ghost,' does not prove anything of the kind. Peter and John went down to examine into the alleged conversions. The Church at Jerusalem had not heretofore been in favour of preaching the gospel among the Samaritans. It was a great step when the Hellenistic Philip ventured to evangelize this people. When the apostles found that the work was real, but that they had not received the fuller gifts of the Holy Spirit, they 'prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.' 'Then laid they their hands on them, *and* they received the Holy Ghost.' But we cannot believe that Peter and John would pretend that they had 'conferred the Holy Ghost' upon them.[2] In answer to their prayer, and as a confirmation of the faith of the Samaritans, the blessing descended. If any had suggested that they had done this thing, would they not have said, as Peter said about the miracle of the cripple, 'Why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had' done it? Was not this the folly of Simon Magus, who imagined the Spirit to be a power somehow in the possession of the apostles, and at their disposal? That

[1] Acts vi. 3.

[2] 'Neque enim aliquis discipulorum ejus dedit Spiritum Sanctum. Orabant quippe, ut veniret in eos, quibus manus imponebant, non ipsi eum dabant. Quem morem in suis præpositis etiam nunc servat ecclesia.' (Augustine, *De Trin.*, lib. xv., 26.) In another place (*De Bapt.*, iii., 16) Augustine says that the gift is only bestowed in the Catholic Church.

which was the 'gift of God,' he, in his ignorance, supposed might be bought with money and handled of men. Moreover, if this power of the Spirit was something given to apostles only, how was it that Ananias, who was only an ordinary member of the Church (Ἦν δέ τις μαθητής), was sent to lay his hands upon the humbled Saul? Does not the 'ordination service' proceed upon the supposition that the gift of the Spirit has already been bestowed upon the candidate? Is he not asked whether he has been 'moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him' this 'office and ministration'? The call and the endowment are from God; the recognition and the employment of the gift are with the Church.

The true account of the gift of the Holy Ghost is supplied in the 'Acts' and Epistles. By the apostles it is attributed to the exaltation and priesthood of the risen Lord. 'This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, HE hath poured forth this which ye now see and hear.'[1] When this apostle preached in the house of Cornelius, the divine power did not wait for the imposition of hands. Somewhat to his surprise it descended as he 'began to speak.'

We cannot here attempt a full exhibition of the process by which the apostolical doctrine on this point became obscured. One indication of the error is given in the disposition to exalt men, which appeared in Corinth[2] and Galatia.[3] Successive phases of the eclipse of scriptural

[1] Acts ii. 32, 33, xi. 15; cf. Eph. iv. 8–16.
[2] 1 Cor. i. 10–17, ii. 5.
[3] Gal. iii. 5, etc.

and apostolical truth may be traced in Clement, Ignatius, Irenæus, Cyprian, and Augustine. At length it ceased to be recognised that justification was received through faith in Jesus Christ, and regeneration by the word. Priests had 'power and commandment' to confer both on unconscious babes in baptism. The *reductio ad absurdum* became complete when it was reckoned a veritable enthusiasm for any one to pretend that he had received the Holy Spirit; when it was concluded that not living, conscious men could be the subjects of His direct action, but only the unknowing infant.[1] Adult believers were to be purified by penance, and 'edified' by the mysterious grace of the Eucharist. Without authority from a bishop neither of these could be effected.

Such dreams must surely vanish now that candid episcopalians like Bishop Lightfoot, Dr. Hatch,—and even some Romish writers,—admit that episcopacy was not absolutely apostolical.[2] The New Testament remains to confute the

[1] 'In the desk the clergy prayed to God to cleanse the thoughts of their hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; in the pulpit they said there was no such thing as inspiration since the time of the apostles.' (Wesley's *Letters.*)

[2] Dr. Hayman, in the *Dublin Review*, Jan., 1885, allows that Presbyterianism was more apostolical than Episcopacy. The Rev. O. Gore (Cuddesdon) says that Prof. Hatch's 'theory is novel.' It may be to him; but the position was asserted long ago by Jerome. It has only been reasserted by Calvin, Daillé, Neander, Rothe, etc. Some one has said of the Tractarian movement: 'Everything would have been different if Newman had known German.' Canon Liddon refers, in support of his high theories, to Beveridge's *Canones*, and to Pearson's *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ*, as 'classical authorities.' Mr. Gore says, in his reply to Dr. Hatch (p. 32): 'Perhaps the best commentary on St. Clement's conception of the relations of the bishop to the congregation in this matter [the Eucharist] will be found in the apparently early account of the bishop's office in the *Apostolical Constitutions*.' But is it well to make a 'forgery' (Dr. Hook's term) of the 4th or 5th century the interpreter of a sub-apostolic writer like Clement? We hope the science of Cuddesdon is more advanced than its theology; but there are symptoms that the best learning and sacerdotalism no longer keep company.

pretension that the three cords of the 'Catholic' ministry existed in separate distinctness in the apostolic age, and much more that they were then twisted into their final firmness. Some would like to prove, if it were possible, that the process was advancing under apostolic sanction. 'It is certain,' says Mr. Simcox, 'that the churches founded by the apostles were originally presbyterian. It appears that they became episcopalian without any revolution at all. The system seems to have been introduced by St. John in Asia.'[1] There is no real foundation for this statement, though it is favoured by Bishop Lightfoot; who, however, does not think that the 'Angels' of the apocalyptic churches were bishops.[2] How then can episcopacy be a mark of 'apostolicity'? If churches were presbyterian in the beginning, and then thought so little of 'orders' and Church government that 'without a revolution' they became episcopalian, what is the lesson?[3]

[1] *Beginnings of the Chr. Ch.*, p. 214.

[2] Köstlin (Herzog, *Real-Enk.*, 'Kirche') and others object to this interpretation. Rothe (*Anfänge*, p. 423), who holds the apostolic origin of episcopacy, says of these 'Angels': 'In diesen Gemeinde-engeln glauben wir eine Prolepsis der Bischöfe in der Idee zu erblicken.' It would be a daring 'prolepsis' indeed which could find monarchical bishops at the date of the Apocalypse: see Lightf., *Phil.*, p. 198. Most moderns regard the 'Angel' as a personification of the Church: *der personificirte Gemeinegeist* (Düsterdieck, *Offenbarung*, p. 138): 'the genius of the Church' (Farrar's *Early Days*, etc., p. 439). This was Origen's view. Buddæus (*Eccles. Apost.*, p. 749) regards them as 'ruling elders.' Powell (*Apost. Succ.*, p. 59) takes 'Angel' 'in a collective sense.'

St. John, who is thus credited with the establishment of episcopacy, calls himself in his later writings (2 Ep. 1; 3 Ep. 1), 'the elder,'—ὁ πρεσβύτερος: cf. 1 Pet. v. 1. The title 'describes not age simply but official position' (Westcott on 2 John 1).

[3] Mr. J. Brownbill (Naden student of St. John's College, Cambridge) says, in his *Principles of English Canon Law* (p. 4), that 'The unit of the visible Church is the diocese of which the chief ruler is called a bishop.' Also (p. 7): 'The constitution of the visible Church at the present day is

The 'logic of facts' made its own impression upon the clear understanding of John Wesley. Thousands of baptized persons had evidently no effectual gift of the Spirit, but were 'practically unregenerate.'[1] Hundreds of ordained men neither preached the gospel nor obeyed it. The Church which professed to have the Holy Spirit as its peculiar and inalienable treasure, failed to recognise the operations of the Spirit. But, apart from these Church ordinances, in which he once trusted, he beheld a manifest working of God upon men's souls. The power, which attended the utterances of the Galilean fishermen on the day of Pentecost, was present when humble and untrained men lifted up their voices in village streets, in the upper rooms of cities, in the dales of Yorkshire, on the pit-heaps of Kingswood and Newcastle, or 'in the long galleries where, in the pauses of his labour, the Cornish miner listens to the sobbing of the sea.'[2] Men were regenerate who had not been baptized. They, on whose heads no episcopal hand had ever been laid, spoke God's word to their neighbours, 'not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.'[3] From all this, though

essentially the same as on the day of Pentecost.' Were the apostles, then, all bishops, and had they dioceses?

[1] Browne on *Thirty-Nine Art.*, p. 616.

[2] Green's *Hist. of the English People*, iv., 146.

[3] 'Our meetings for preaching and public worship were mostly held in the kitchens of farm-houses and the cottages of labouring men. The preacher usually stood behind a chair, the back of which supported a moveable desk, upon which lay his Bible and Hymn-book; the people standing or sitting upon chairs, tables, stools, or chests of drawers, as the case might be. In these humble sanctuaries the people worshipped God in spirit and in truth, as their entire behaviour indicated. The sermons to which they listened contained no elaborate phraseology, no disquisitions on dark and doubtful questions, and no hard technical terms; their substance being the essential truths of Christ's gospel, and their garb pure Saxon English, which even the

he never despised Divine ordinances, he learned that God's word was not bound by the limitations of a human priesthood. The Holy Ghost, freed of old from the limitations of Judaism, was no more 'entangled by any yoke of bondage,' which man's ignorance and sin had made necessary in previous ages. He did not perfectly enter into this spiritual freedom, which, however, he saw was at hand;—like Moses, who only came to Nebo and saw the goodly land. But when he was 'gathered to his fathers,' our Israel came into their inheritance.

These, then, are matters of history. In the course of a century and a half, millions of men of almost every nation have been evangelized, and gathered under the banners of the Lord Jesus Christ. Time would fail to speak of the 'work of faith and labour of love' accomplished in this period. What zeal among the neglected populations of our own land, what devotion among the heathen abroad! Was there ever more unworldly 'enthusiasm of humanity' engaged in the service of the Church, a freer use of wealth and talent for the benefit of the lowliest, or a more abounding and incontrollable outpouring of charity toward all men? The fresh demonstration of the converting power of the gospel has revived the faith of the Church in its mission, and in the persuasion that God will yet in our world 'make all things new.' Millions of the selfish have become beneficent and consecrated. Debased and degraded populations have been at times simultaneously elevated and transformed. Cannibals have forsaken and forgotten their hellish longings; idolaters, with one consent, have

children understood, delivered with a broad Yorkshire accent' (*Life of Rev. T. Jackson*, p. 65).

broken the spell of their fathers' enchantments. Backwoodsmen, so far out in the forest or the prairie, that no circle of civilization has included them, have been reached by these lines which have 'gone out to the end of the world.' Red Indians, Tongese, Fijians, Kaffirs, Ceylonese, Bengali, Chinese, Italians, Germans, Swedes, are at this hour preaching the gospel which they have received through us. How have these marvels been wrought? If the Church governed by bishops alone has grace, and can alone dispense the Spirit, as Cyprian and Augustine, as Laud and Beveridge, as Potter and Pusey and Liddon affirm, by what power has this work been done? Is Satan at last divided against himself? Does Beelzebub now cast out devils? We dare not believe this. Is there no danger of committing the sin which our Lord said was 'unpardonable' if we attribute these spiritual marvels to any power but that of God? We will not 'blaspheme against the Holy Ghost' by ascribing these results—'wide as the world,' which glorify Christ in the salvation of men, to the evil power.

But those who trace their 'succession' through a sometimes half-mythical, and not always venerable, list of Popes and Bishops, suggest that these gospel results may be of God, but they are 'uncovenanted.' Or they say, they are not called to 'judge them that are without.' 'If Dissenters enjoy communion with Christ (and I rejoice in believing that many do enjoy it),' says Mr. Ward, 'it is not through their Church . . . but our Church is a channel of sacramental grace. A religious person . . . will fix his affections immediately on the Church. . . . The English Church will be to him the visible embodiment and channel of the Lord's presence. . . . The creeds and Prayer-book have all

that the sinful soul can need; all, that is, except supernatural grace, and that our Church is also privileged to dispense.'[1]

But when was this 'covenant' made which ordained that the Church when administered by a priesthood of three grades should have supernatural grace in its sacraments and services, but that none besides should claim it? There is not a word of this in Scripture. To any 'covenant of grace' not mentioned there, the Romanist and the Romanizer are welcome. But we cannot but think with how much more countenance and verisimilitude the Jew could have appealed to the Christian. He had a 'covenant' which had stood for 'a thousand generations.' It had come through Abraham, and Moses, and Prophets. How could there be salvation without circumcision and the keeping of the law?[2] Was the believer going to break with the past? Would he forsake 'the congregation of the Lord's people'? Could another temple be built as sacred as that at Jerusalem? Would the 'Real Presence' be manifest at other altars? Could any priesthood be valid except that of the race of Levi? How much more real in cogency and pathos would be such appeals to tradition, to authority, to Scripture even, than in the lips of Gentile Christians, whose place in the Church has only been won by the doctrine of the Cross,—a doctrine which implies the surrender of the traditional principle! Yet as these were the arguments used against Paul and his converts, and used against Luther and the Reformers, so were they used against Wesley and his people. They are used still.

[1] *Ideal of a Christian Church*, 1844.

[2] 'Take heed, be not like some who say, "The covenant is ours"' (*Ep. Barn.*, c. 4). The Lat. vers. has 'dicunt: quia testamentum illorum et nostrum.' But the Greek, as above, is preferable.

Finally, upon this point, let us ask, What have the 'Catholics,' who boast of their 'succession from the apostles—not one link of which is missing,' more than other Christians? Have they the word of God? So have we. Have they the grace of the Holy Spirit when the word is preached, convincing men 'of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment'? So have we. Have they the forgiveness of sins? So have we, by the boundless mercy of God: and not assured to us by the authority of priests, but 'the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God.' Do they find the throne of grace accessible in public and in private, and do they receive the things for which they ask? So do we; though we are far too unthankful for this condescension of God. When 'two or three are gathered together' in Christ's name, is He 'in the midst of them'? We can testify to the universal Church that, in the fulfilment of this promise, the Lord of glory has especially favoured us beyond 'all we could ask or think.' Have they the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, by which admission to the Church, and every benefit of salvation, is signified and attested? Have they a living ministry, a godly order and holy lives? So have we. Have they the 'fruits of the Spirit,' and do they abound in faith, hope and love? Have they zeal and self-sacrifice? Have they gifts of utterance, of demonstrative speech, of exhortation and consolation, of counsel and knowledge? Do they 'rejoice in tribulation,' endure temptation, 'fight the good fight of faith,' and do they triumph in death? Do they 'rejoice in hope of the glory of the Lord,' and 'wait for the coming of the Son of man'? All these are ours. 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord

Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.'[1]

Moreover, have we no place in the Church of Christ, because, in the Providence of God, we are not formally interwoven into the broken and riven unity, the history of whose formation is associated with many a fraud, and which is now fatally separated into three knotted and tangled strands? Do we break from Clemens Romanus, from Barnabas, from Irenæus, from Justin the philosopher

[1] Dr. J. H. Newman (*Anglican Difficulties*, p. 88) says that, if he wished to match the principal saints of his Church, he would go to the Wesleyans rather than to the English Church. 'If you wish to find the shadow and suggestion of the supernatural qualities which make up the notion of a Catholic saint, to Wesley you must go and such as him. Personally, I do not like him [alas!], if it were merely for his deep self-reliance and self-conceit; still I am bound in justice to ask, and you in consistency to answer, what historical person in the Establishment, during the whole three centuries, has approximated in force and splendour of achievements, to one who began by innovating on your rules, and ended by contemning your authorities? He and his companions, starting amid ridicule at Oxford, with fasting and praying in the cold night air, then going about preaching, reviled by the rich and educated, pelted and dragged to prison by the populace, and converting their thousands from sin to God's service—were it not for their pride and eccentricity, their fanatical doctrine and untranquil devotion, they would startle us, as if the times of St. Vincent or St. Francis Xavier were come again in a Protestant land.'

Both Dr. Newman and Dr. Manning would allow that the Spirit of God was in the spiritual results of Methodism. The latter, in his letter to Dr. Pusey (*Working of the Holy Spirit in the Ch. of Eng.*, 1865), and in his *Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, argues that the Spirit is given to every man. The Spirit in the Church dates from Pentecost: the Spirit in all men dates from creation. It is correct to say with Irenæus, 'Where the Church is, there is the Spirit,' but it would not be true to say, 'Where the Church is not, neither is the Spirit there.' This doctrine is elastic and convenient.

Another testimony from a writer of the same school is the following: 'Something of the Divine Spirit [was] in a work which issued in universal progress. . . . To see the progress of Methodism in every country where the English Church has a place or name, must make us confess that if God be not present in every single stage, nor in every positive act which was necessary to be done in that progress, still He could not have been altogether absent.' (Bennett's *Broken Unity*, iii., 111.)

of Samaria, because we do not accept their interpretation as infallible? On the contrary, we believe these earliest Christian writers to be really on our side.[1] They have been searched through and through for statements and expressions which would justify sacerdotal and sacramental theories. But their substance and the major part of what they say are in favour of simple, spiritual religion. We are ready to confess that their testimony on this supreme topic has not been so amply used as it ought to have been. But we do not despise, or intentionally separate from any of these early fathers,—and, certainly, we do not wish so to do in the least commandment of the kingdom of God. Where are they who absolutely follow any of the 'Fathers'? Do we not venerate the names of Tertullian and Origen, yea, even of Cyprian and Augustine? But we do not feel that we are bound to accept the severity of the Carthaginian ascetic, or the vagaries of the Alexandrian exegete, or the Leviticalism of the Bishop of Carthage, or the fatalism of the Bishop of Hippo.[2] We are charmed with the eloquence of Chrysostom as with that of Jeremy Taylor, and have some appreciation for the learning of

1 Wesley's *Sermon at the Foundation of City Road Chapel.*

2 Tertullian magnified the 'apostolical succession,' but only in the interests of pure doctrine. He said (*De Pud.*, c. 21) that it is 'the Spirit which combines the Church,' and that 'the Lord has made the Church to consist in three;' [Matt. xviii. 20]. The Church consists of 'a spiritual man and not of a number of bishops:' *ecclesia spiritus per spiritualem hominem, non ecclesia numerus episcoporum.* The 'spiritual man' was not always a cleric before that time; but subsequently the principle which Montanism had contained was assimilated by the Church in its view of ordination. Cyprian also can say: 'There is a brief way . . . to put away error and to elicit truth. For, if we return to the head and source of divine tradition, human error ceases . . . if in any respect the truth have wavered . . . we should return to our Lord and origin, and the evangelical tradition' (*Ep.* lxxiii., 10). Then, straightway, he begins to speak of the 'sacrament of unity.'

Jerome as for that of Hammond and Beveridge. Thomas à Kempis may teach us, as he taught Wesley, how we may aspire to the 'Imitation of Christ.' Anselm and Thomas Aquinas have yet lessons for us in the deep things of God. Neither Hooker, Pearson, nor Butler, Andrewes, Hopkins, nor Stillingfleet, nor yet Bossuet or Fenelon, is without edification for us. Luther and Calvin are among our instructors but not absolute dictators. We profit by the calm, clear investigations of Dr. Lightfoot, by the 'picturesque wisdom' of the lamented Dean Stanley, by the ardent rhetoric of Canon Farrar; and we ask Ellicott, Westcott, and others of their communion, to help us in the study of the New Testament. Our want of learning and want of leisure compel us to dependence upon them at many points. And are we not indebted to such men as Arminius, Grotius, Bengel; to Neander, Meyer, Dorner, Chalmers, Pressensé, and Schaff? 'All are yours; whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas. For ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' Have not many of these whom we have mentioned been thankful that God has set them free from the intolerable bondage of Rome—that they have had the privilege of seeking a deeper and broader catholicity than Rome allowed? We share their joy in this respect; but we think we have a yet greater gift of God than many of them seem to have received. We seek spiritual unity of Christ, than which we believe there is no other 'catholicity.' For in Christ Jesus, 'neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision'—and therefore, we think, neither Episcopalianism, nor Presbyterianism, nor Methodism—'availeth anything, but a new creation.'

CHAPTER V.

UNITY AND CATHOLICITY.

'I pray . . . that they may all be one.'[1]
'Be studious of union—to which nothing is superior.'[2]
'Christ hath never appointed two ways to heaven.'[3]

THE noun 'unity' is nowhere used in the New Testament of the Church. It only occurs twice, and in one chapter—Eph. iv. 3, 13. In the first we read of the 'unity of the Spirit,'[4] which we are exhorted to keep 'in the bond of peace.' In the second the 'unity of the faith' is mentioned.[5] But it is not said of this, as of the former, that it is to be kept (*τηρεῖν*). It is something for the Church to aim at, and eventually to arrive at.[6] The 'one faith,' says Dr. Dale, 'is not a common creed, but a common trust in Christ for eternal righteousness and eternal glory. . . . The

[1] John xvii. 21.

[2] *τῆς ἑνώσεως φρόντιζε, ἧς οὐδὲν ἄμεινον* (Ignat. *Ad Polyc.*). Dr. Hatch (*Org. of Early Ch.*, p. 188) says that Hegesippus (ap. Eus. *H. E.*, iv., 22) is the first to mention unity, *ἡ ἕνωσις τῆς ἐκκλησίας*, referring to heretics who spoke against God and Christ. But was not Ignatius earlier than Hegesippus, whose date is 120–180? See Smith's *Dict. of Christ. Biog.*

[3] Bp. Pearson.

[4] *ἡ ἑνότης τοῦ πνεύματος.* [5] *ἡ ἑνότης τῆς πίστεως.*

[6] *μέχρι καταντήσωμεν εἰς κ.τ.λ.* Καταντάω, only Acts and Epistles of Paul. Phil. iii. 11, *εἴ πως καταντήσω εἰς τ. ἐξανάστασιν*: 'If so be I might attain,' etc. (Lightfoot). *Οἱ πάντες* (Eph. iv. 13) includes Jews and Gentiles. Meyer and Alford quote Chrysostom: *τὸ πνεῦμα τοὺς γένει καὶ τρόποις διαφόροις διεστηκότας ἑνοῖ* = The Spirit unites those who differ in race and customs.

unity of the Church, according to Paul's conception of it, is a unity of Spirit, not of external statesmanship. It actually exists, notwithstanding differences of polity and differences of creed. . . . The unity does not merely exist . . . it has been manifested—is manifested in a remarkable unity of doctrine, in a common ideal of ethical perfection . . . in a new and original type of the religious life.'[1]

It was because the 'unity' of the Church was of the 'Spirit' that it could comprise into 'one body' men of different races and of different opinions, who worshipped God under a great diversity of religious observances. Between the Jew and the heathen usually there was deep and unconcealed dislike.[2] A Jew 'would not so much as eat with' a Gentile. Peter told Cornelius 'how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to join himself or come unto one of another nation' (Acts x. 28). On his return to Jerusalem 'they that were of the circumcision contended' with him upon this point. Hitherto the Church had consisted entirely of Jews. A great step towards universality was gained when the Italian Cornelius — a proselyte of the gate—was admitted by baptism into the Church. Subsequently, at the great Council of Jerusalem, the 'necessary things,' imposed by decree upon the Gentile Christians, were only those which had been required from this class of proselytes.[3] Even then the original Christians did not think it possible for any to be admitted to the

[1] *Lect. on Ephes.*, p. 290. Cf. Farrar, *E. Days of Cy.*, p. 136.

[2] Tiberius banished Jews with other oriental religionists—*nisi certam ante diem profanos ritus exuissent* (Tac. *Ann.*, ii., p. 85). Juvenal (*Sat.* xiv., 96) derides the Jews who observe Sabbaths and *nil praeter nubes et cæli numen adorant*; who eat no pork, practise circumcision, and are impatient under Roman laws: *Odio humani generis convicti sunt* (Tacit. *Ann.*, xv., p. 44).

[3] Ritschl, *Entstehung*, p. 129.

Church without some recognition of the ancient law. The apostles themselves, who had been sent to 'disciple all nations,'[1] did not know at first how any one could become a Christian who had not submitted to Jewish rites.

But St. Paul was entrusted with another 'dispensation of the grace of God.'[2] It announced that the Gentiles, without being Judaized, should be 'fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body.' This dispensation had been 'from all ages hid in God, who created all things,' and who now 'remembered the work of His own hands.' The nations that had been 'alienated from the commonwealth of Israel,' were 'made nigh in the blood of Christ,' and admitted into the citizenship of the heavenly Jerusalem. Through Christ the middle wall of partition was broken down; the enmity, which was produced and sustained by 'the law of commandments contained in ordinances,' was abolished; and both the Gentiles who had been far off from God, and the Jews who had been nigh, now had 'access,' without the ancient ceremonies—ready to pass away, 'in one Spirit unto the Father.'

This was the 'unity of the faith'—the unity which faith implied and indicated, and to which Paul desired that all believers should come. They did not 'come to' this visible unity in his day, nor have they in ours. The forced unity of Rome was but a transient counterfeit of it. During the apostolic age some believers retained the observance of every Jewish rite. Some persisted, no doubt, in the observance of the decrees of Jerusalem.[3] Most Gentiles

[1] *μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.* [2] Eph. iii. 2.

[3] It is singular that the 'decrees' are never referred to in the writings of St. Paul. No reference to them occurs in the subsequent controversies.

ceased from attempting to conform to Jewish practices. So there was diversity in unity. One man had faith to eat all things, esteemed every day alike, while another ate only herbs lest he should be defiled, and observed days and months, seasons and years. But the 'unity of the Spirit' was not broken by these distinctions. We must not confound the 'one faith' which all must of necessity have —both Jews and Gentiles—with the 'unity of the faith,' to the realization of which in the time to come all may look. The 'one faith'[1] was the common, subjective trust in Jesus as Messiah and Saviour, which made its possessor a Christian. At this point unity existed, and exists still. This is the unity in the Church which the men of this world have detected. On account of it 'the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch'[2] by men outside the

[1] 'To make of πίστις the doctrine of the faith, is at variance with linguistic usage' (Meyer). 'To assume a meaning *doctrina fidei* is everywhere superfluous' (Cremer, *Lex.*). Such a passage as 'the faith,' Gal. i. 23, does not make it = Christianity, the objective gospel. Those Christians who denied the apostleship of Paul and the Church position of his followers, would scarcely receive his views of justification, or even of the Person of Christ.

The following from the Canon of Muratori (A.D. 170) is worthy of notice: 'Though various ideas (*varia principia*) are taught in each of the Gospels, it makes no difference to the faith of believers, since in all of them all things are declared by one sovereign Spirit (*uno ac principali Spiritu*), concerning the nativity, the passion, the resurrection,' etc. As long as the Creed referred only to the facts of Christianity, there was substantial unity; when the creeds began to include theories upon the facts, division began. On some of these points the Lecturer may be allowed to refer to a paper read before a 'Ministers' United Meeting' in Newcastle, and published in the *Methodist Magazine*, Dec., 1861, entitled 'An Apology for Sects.'

[2] The hearers of our Lord and the earliest of the apostles were called 'disciples.' One of the last seems to have been 'Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple.' The name 'Christians' was not likely to have been given by Jews. Amongst themselves, believers were called *brethren, faithful, saints*. The R. V. suggests that thus early (*circ.* A.D. 43) this Roman name was applied. This would account for the fact that soon afterwards Christians were

Church. The world still calls every one a Christian who professes the faith of Christ; and thus conveniently classifies these in distinction from all who may call Confucius, or Buddha, or Mahomet, their master.[1] But this is a secular conception of the unity of Christians. Yet it is the only 'visible unity.' The Romanist contends that there is a visible unity, and that it is in his Church. But apart from every other objection—and several which appeal to Scripture and authority are fatal to such a notion—we can appeal to the judgment of the Romanist himself. Does he allege that every one who professes to be a Roman Catholic is a real Christian? He is compelled to admit that there may be hypocrites in his communion. But these persons are part of the 'visible Church.' Therefore the visible Church is one thing, and the true Church is another. If he says that he means only good Romanists, he is speaking of a unity which is not visible.[2]

distinguished from other Jews by the Roman authorities (Ewald). Gieseler (*Ch. Hist.*, i., p. 73) and others think it was given in ridicule. If so, its origin was like that of 'Methodist.' Certainly this was the name which persecution aimed at: Tacit. *Ann.*, xv., 44; 1 Pet. iv. 16; Tert. *Apol.*, 3; Eus. *H. E.*, v., 1. The pseudo-Ignatius (*Ad Magn.*, x., and *Ad Antioch.*) and other unfounded Church tradition, which Bishop Wordsworth follows, suggest that the name was given by the Lord. Ignatius, *Ad Rom.*, c. iii., is the first to use the term Χριστιανισμός. 'This new name likewise comes from Antioch' (Westcott, *On Canon*, p. 33), as well as that of 'the Catholic Church': 'Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church' (Ignat., *Ad Smyrn.*, c. viii.).

[1] 'The ἐκκλησία is the company called out from the mass by the preaching of the completed redemption of the Incarnate Mediation. It is the *Church* as gathered from the world; it is the *congregation* as assembled together; it is the *fellowship* as replenished with common gifts' (Pope's *Compendium*, iii., p. 263).

[2] It would be difficult for the first disciples to think that the 'one flock' would be anything but a Jewish unity (Farrar's *St. Paul*, p. 78). In after days, the text, John x. 16, was wrested, like many others, to the service of Rome. The old Latin *unus grex*, one *flock*, was supplanted by *unum ovile*,

The Anglican pretension that theirs is the only true Church in these islands, is denied by the Church of Rome as well as by others. The wholesale perversions of the last half-century show how feeble are the Anglican arguments against the subtleties and zeal of Rome, which can urge the plea of the 'twofold ground of safety.' The Anglican admits that Rome is a branch of the true Church of Christ. He who goes to Rome has the assurance of Anglican opinion on his side. He who remains in the Anglican fellowship has the disadvantage of being under the ban of Rome, which at the same time he is taught to regard as a veritable branch of the Catholic Church.

It may be said that Nonconformists allow that Romanists can be saved, and that therefore the same reasoning ought to lead them to Romanism. But there is this difference. The Nonconformists do not hold that membership in any Church of itself secures salvation. The Romish and Anglican doctrine is that only members of their Church are certain of salvation. Where families and congregations, candidates for confirmation and ordination, are sedulously taught that they must either be in the Romish or in the Anglican Church to obtain salvation, no wonder that Rome is often chosen, since her fold is recommended on both sides.[1]

one *fold*: 'a disastrous translation, which invested unity in the outward enclosure, instead of in the common attachment to one shepherd' (Westcott). It was easy to make the Pope, rather than Christ, the *unus pastor*.

[1] A typical case, one among hundreds, is that of the Rev. J. K. Stone (formerly President of the Kenyon College, Ohio), an American Episcopalian. The French edition of his work, *L'Invitation acceptée, Motifs d'un Retour à l'Unité Catholique*, has an introduction from M. Mermillod. The several steps of the easy process from Anglicanism to Romanism are naively described. When the Church is set above Scripture, it is not difficult to demand *subjectio ad legitimum pastorem, Romanum pontificem* (Bellarm. *De Eccles. Milit.*, iii., 2).

Methodists and Nonconformists have furnished few accessions to the older Catholics during the last fifty years. Those who have passed over from them have usually been prepared by some experience of Anglicanism.

The 'outward and visible' unity of the Church, then, consists of 'all who profess and call themselves Christians.' The value of the expression is that of a simple, general term, by which the observer formulates his conception of the Christian community, which he finds among other phenomena of time and space. No one can point to any 'visible unity' and say: 'These make up the true Church; every one within this number is a member of Christ's body—all without it have no part in Him.' This would be to apply to the phenomenal the predicates of the real.[1] Further, such a doctrine of unity ignores the fact of human responsibility. 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom.'[2] But they are all in the 'visible Church.' The gospel is sent out with the sanction, 'He that believeth shall be saved,' and not 'every one called a Christian shall be saved.'[3] 'The unity of the Church has but one ground, that of a common union with Christ.'[4]

The *real* Church, or the *real* unity, like the *real* universe,

[1] 'Katholicismus von seiner empirischen Kirche behaupt was nur der idealem zukomme' (Köstlin: Herzog, *R.-E.* 1880, art. *Kirche*).

[2] The Rev. A. Barrett, in his *Ministry and Polity of the New Testament*, 1854, p. 40, distinguishes between the *Church* and the *Kingdom*. The former is outward and visible; the latter is 'The company of Christ's faithful disciples and subjects.' But in Matt. xiii. the *Kingdom* seems to be more comprehensive than the *Church*. Cf. Dr. Gregory's *Lecture*, pp. 112–121.

[3] 'If by external profession they be Christians, then they are of the visible Church' (Hooker, *Ecc. Pol.*, iii., 1).

[4] Pope's *Compendium*, iii., 268.

is that which is known to God only. He searches all hearts, and 'knoweth them that are His.' The Good Shepherd 'calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.' To this higher unity, as St. Paul teaches, the Church hopes to come. He foresaw that in Christ's own future the Church should attain this perfection, and be presented to Him 'a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.' In it the divisions caused by the bias of education, by antagonisms of race, by antipathies of history, would cease. But this can only be in the Church when it answers to the purpose of God—in that 'new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him: where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.' (Col. iii. 10, 11.)

Catholicity is not the same as unity. They may be correlative ideas, but they are somewhat independent. Unity endeavours to subjugate all particulars to the general; catholicity or universality seeks to apply the general to particular cases. Unity was the watchword of the Jerusalem Church under Peter and James; universality was that of the catholic-spirited Paul, who sought 'to gather into one' all nations. No one disputes that the primitive Church had unity; but full catholicity it had not, nor has it yet attained it.

When we hear Romish and Anglican authors speaking so boastfully of the oneness of their belief and practice as distinguished from the uncertainty and contradictoriness which belong to Dissenters, we cannot but ask how it was in this respect with the primitive Church? Did they

'sweetly think and speak the same'? What are the facts? For the first ten years after Pentecost, the only Christians were Jews. Even among these there arose at length a difference between native Jews and foreign Jews, which issued in the appointment of Hellenistic Church officers, and by no very remote connection in the martyrdom of Stephen.[1] Then Philip went to Samaria, where he preached the gospel, and many believed, who would never come to Jerusalem to worship, but would, most likely, continue to follow Samaritan rites. About A.D. 41, Cornelius, an Italian proselyte, was added to the Church; and, ten years later still, the Jerusalem Council agreed to impose upon Gentile converts only the usual observances required from 'proselytes of the gate.' By this time Paul was proclaiming to Galatians, Ephesians, and Corinthians, the free gospel. He was bold enough to say that it was retrogression in Gentiles to adopt Jewish ceremonies. 'Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.'[2] In A.D. 64, it is believed, Peter and Paul laid down their lives for Christ. What was the condition of the Church at their death? Did Christians all meet in one place? Was there one elder over every Church? Was there one presiding elder or bishop over every group of Churches? No one can make such an assertion. All that can be ventured is that 'Episcopacy was beginning to make

[1] Farrar's *St. Paul*, p. 82, who, with Conybeare and Howson, refers to the fact that Stephen, himself a Hellenist, had come into collision with members of several synagogues, particularly that of *Cilicia*, of which Saul of Tarsus would probably be a member. 'Neander has rightly followed Baur in regarding Stephen as the predecessor of St. Paul' (Lechler, p. 334). See Neander, *Planting*, etc., i., pp. 48–54.

[2] Gal. v. 4; Col. ii. 16, 17.

an appearance.'[1] Bishop Lightfoot also defers the fuller recognition of it to St. John, who lived to a later time in Asia. But if episcopacy, in the modern sense of the word, is not apostolic, how can it prove apostolicity, or how can it be the sovereign sign of Christian unity?

We see then that, when the chief apostles died,—

1. The Christians did not all hold the same opinions in matters of doctrine.
2. They did not all worship with the same rites. Some were Jews, who still worshipped at Jerusalem, and insisted on every Mosaic or even traditional enactment. Others were 'proselytes of righteousness,' who were very zealous for the law which they had adopted, and whose principal sign, 'circumcision,' they had received. Others were 'proselytes of the gate,' who ate no meat

[1] 'At the close of the apostolic age the two lower orders of the threefold ministry were firmly and widely established; but traces of the third and highest order, the Episcopate properly so called, are few and indistinct.' (Lightfoot, *Phil.*, p. 193.) Dr. Jacob (*Eccles. Pol.*, p. 75) opposes the view, borrowed from Tertullian, that St. John appointed bishops. On page 47 he shows how the original 'ministry of gifts' was gradually displaced by the 'ministry of orders.' Dr. Curteis (*Church and Dissent*, p. 27) cleaves to the other theory: 'From amid the chaos of Gnostic sects there had sprung up, under the inspired guidance of St. John and his immediate disciples, the Episcopal system of that Church, which was destined to be the unbroken bond of union and guarantee of freedom amid the storms of a thousand years.' He refers to Tert. *Contra Marc.*, iv., 5: *Ordo Episcoporum ad originem recensus in Johannem stabit auctorem:* 'The order of [Asiatic] bishops, when traced to its origin, will rest on John as its author.' But (1) this is a mere supposition of Tertullian, who gives no proof; (2) all that Tertullian asserts is that these Churches had received the gospel from apostolic men; (3) the presbyters in John's time were called bishops also. Episcopacy cannot claim an inspired origin in this way. (4) Who can prove that there was a 'chaos of Gnostic sects' so early as this would imply?

sold in heathen shambles, and attended the synagogue for instruction in the law. But an increasing number had entered into free and spiritual Christianity. They did not keep the Jewish sabbaths or feast-days: to them 'all things were pure.'[1] As the number of Christians increased, and their divergence from ordinary Jewish opinion became manifest, new synagogues, predominantly Christian, would be opened. In these first Christian assemblies, no doubt, Gentile influence would soon, in many countries, be supreme.

3. In the larger churches, the convention of persons holding different opinions caused frequent confusion. This was the case at Rome.[2] At Corinth, the whole Church was divided.[3] There is no clear or satisfactory history yet of these strifes between the various parties in the early Church. But to deny them is absurd.

Yet all these opposed sections of the first Christian society, with their differing proclivities and habitudes, were held together by their common allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ. His name was yet 'above every name.' At His name, all bowed in submission. Paul and Peter and Apollos were but 'ministers' by whom the hearers of the gospel had believed. The Petrinists would

[1] Tit. i. 15: *πάντα καθαρὰ τ. καθαροῖς.* [2] Rom. xi. 13, xiv.

[3] 1 Cor. i. 12: *ἕκαστος ὑμῶν λέγει*: 'each one of you saith.' Chrysost. says: 'The corruption has spread over the whole Church.' The same Church, according to Clement, *Ep.*, i. 47, at a later period had been the scene of a 'sedition against its presbyters.'

have liked to exclude the Paulinists as 'unauthorized,' 'Dissenters,' and the like. When Paul began to hold meetings in the 'school of one Tyrannus' at Ephesus, it would be sneered at as a 'conventicle;' and when 'for two whole years in his own hired dwelling' at Rome he 'received all that went unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, . . . none forbidding him,' some would doubtless look upon it as a dreadfully schismatic proceeding. Were there not synagogues?[1]

The idea of the Church and of its worship which was most favoured by the 'Fathers' and Church leaders from the second century onwards was that of the temple with its hierarchy. St. Paul had already drawn an analogy between the priests of the temple and the ministers of Christian congregations.[2] 'Know ye not that they which minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they which wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? Even so did the Lord ordain that they which proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel.' But while the two classes had a resemblance at one point, viz. that they ministered to the people, and therefore had a right to be maintained by the people, how careful he is to show the distinction in their duties! The one serve 'the altar,'[3] for it had not yet been abolished. If the 'table of the Lord' had been regarded as an altar upon which the 'daily sacrifice' was offered, such an expression would

[1] Acts ii. 46: κατ' οἶκον. Strauss thought this incompatible with 'continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple.' There were churches in houses everywhere; see Rom. xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xiv. 23, xvi. 19; Col. iv. 15; Philem. 2. Lechler (*Nachap. Zeit.*, p. 282) supposes that the house-to-house 'fellowship' first began to distinguish the Christians from other Jews.

[2] 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. [3] οἱ τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ παρεδρεύοντες.

have been wholly out of place. But the calling of the minister was 'to preach the gospel.' Since all the people of God were now 'priests,' the only office to which he could have pretended was to be high priest. But 'no man taketh the honour unto himself, but when he is called of God, even as was Aaron.' The High Priest of the Christian had entered the true sanctuary in heaven.

During the period in which the temple and its ritual survived, the Christian 'elders' could take no part in its services except as worshippers. The synagogues of the holy city, and those in other cities where they happened to be, were open to them. It is very probable that the Christian meetings in private houses were conducted upon the plan of the worship of the synagogues.[1] Among Gentile Christians the free and informal style of worship would be usually followed.[2] It is not until the end of the first century that any regulations with regard to Christian worship were laid down: that is, so far as our information goes.

When Clement made his famous comparison between the Jewish priests and Christian ministers, he was probably as far from ascribing any sacerdotal prerogatives to the latter as St. Paul was. But, as we have shown elsewhere, his language has been interpreted in favour of those prerogatives. However, he did plead that Christian services should be observed at stated times and places; and he speaks of the 'elders' and 'bishops' as those who

[1] Jas. ii. 2, *συναγωγή* = Christian assembly (Alford; Huther; Bengel, *Nomen Judæis ad Christianos traductum*).

[2] 1 Cor. xiv.; Pliny's letter to Trajan, x., 27; Schaff, *Hist. of Ch.*, i., 458-460.

'offer the gifts.'[1] In the Epistles of Ignatius we read of 'the altar.' The temple at Jerusalem was now no more, but the new worship had come in its place. Irenæus speaks of 'the oblation of the Church,' but he only means the free-will offerings of the people, and adds that 'the altar is in heaven.'[2] Justin Martyr[3] says that the Eucharist was consecrated with praise and prayer by 'the president of the brethren,' but handed round by 'those who are called by us deacons.' This is a remarkable testimony from the middle of the second century. It shows that in the Churches with which Justin was acquainted there were no 'priests,' and, so far as he relates, only two orders of ministers. When we come to the false writings which passed under the name of Ignatius, sacerdotalism is more plainly expressed. 'Do nothing without the bishops, for they are priests. They baptize, perform priestly office, ordain and lay on hands.'[4] Barnabas, while speaking of the abolition of the Jewish temple and sacrifices, says that God now requires a spiritual temple within us, and 'a human oblation.'[5] That singular but interesting book, the *Pastor* of *Hermas*, could not have been written by the person mentioned by St. Paul,[6] for he speaks of there being 'bishops, teachers and deacons' in the Church.

[1] The use of the present in *Ep. Clem.*, 40 *et al.*, *e.g.* ἱστίκαμεν, is sufficient to raise a doubt about genuineness. It professes to have been written while the temple was standing. But see Smith's *Dict. of Christ. Biog.*, i., 556.

[2] A.D. 170 (*Cont. Hær.*, iv., 18).

[3] A.D. 150 (*Apol.*, i., 65).

[4] *Ep.*, *to Hero*, ch. iii.

[5] *Ep.*, ch. xvi.

[6] Rom. xvi. 14. The Tübingen writers generally claim Hermas as an Ebionite, but this cannot be maintained. The older writers regarded him as the friend of St. Paul. Zahn, Dr. Salmon (Smith's *Dict. of Christ. Biog.*), and others, hold that he lived in Clement's time. But the Muratorian Canon says he was brother of Pius, Bishop of Rome, A.D. 140.

The account given by Tertullian[1] of the Christian worship in his day is so striking that we will reproduce it here in an abridged form. 'We are a body knit together as such by a common religious profession, by unity of discipline, and by a common hope. We congregate that, offering up prayer to God unitedly, we may wrestle with Him. . . . We assemble to read our sacred writings. . . . In the same place also exhortations are made, rebukes and sacred censures are administered. . . . The tried men of our elders preside over us, obtaining that honour not by purchase, but by character. . . . On the monthly collection day, if he likes, each puts in a small donation, but all is voluntary. . . . They are wroth with us because we call each other brethren. . . . Yet about the modest supper-room[2] of the Christians alone, a great ado is made. Our feast explains itself by its name. The Greeks call it love.[3] Whatever it costs, our outlay in the name of piety is gain, since with the good things of the feast we benefit the needy. . . . Before sitting down, we pray. . . . After partaking and washing of hands, lights are brought in [for reading]. Each is asked to stand forth and sing, as he can, a hymn to God, either one from the Holy Scriptures or of private composition. As the feast commenced with prayer, so with prayer it is closed.'

Such was the worship of Christians in North Africa towards the end of the second century. Certainly, Tertullian speaks of the 'three orders,' and forbids the layman to

[1] *Apolog.*, c. 39 (A.D. 200).

[2] Could he have said this if the ritual of the Eucharist had approached the character it assumed in after days?

[3] Tertullian wrote in Latin. He here refers to the Greek name of the 'love-feast,' *i.e.*, Ἀγάπη.

usurp the duties of the bishop.[1] He calls the bishop the *summus sacerdos* or chief priest. But this only seems to be in reference to the fact that all Christians are priests. If all were priests, then the presiding elder, or overseer of the Church, was 'chief priest.'[2] Such expressions, torn away from their context, have served the purpose of centuries of sacerdotalists.

In his treatise on 'Prayer,'[3] Tertullian uses language which shows that the later notions of a 'sacrifice' in the Eucharist, with its associated superstitions, had not yet been dreamed of. 'Every institution is excellent which, for the extolling and honouring of God, aims unitedly to bring Him enriched prayer as a choice victim. This is the spiritual victim which has abolished sacrifices. God is a spirit, and requires His adorers to be such. We are the true adorers and the true priests (*veri sacerdotes*), who, praying in spirit, sacrifice in spirit, the victim being prayer to God. This [offering] devoted from the whole heart, fed on faith, tended by truth, entire in innocence, pure in chastity, garlanded with love, we ought to escort with the procession of good works, amid psalms and hymns, unto God's altar, to obtain for us all things from God.' This is only imagery, borrowed partly from Jewish and partly from heathen worship. But the advocates of externalism have found it convenient to give it a literal significance.

It is said that Cyprian was a professed disciple of Tertullian. 'Give me the Master,' he said, when asking for one of his books. He was a bishop in the same

[1] *De Bapt.*, c. xvii.
[2] *De Ex. Cast.*, c. vii.: 'Nonne et laici sacerdotes sumus?'
[3] Tert. *De Orat.*, xxvii., xxviii.

country, but lived half a century later. During that period great changes took place in the political and religious world. The number of believers was greatly multiplied, and the rich and learned were beginning to join the Church. It was necessary to adapt the forms of worship to the taste of the cultured class, and to bring Church government into systematic order. Cyprian, who had native genius, cultivated ability as a rhetorician, and distinguished social position, though he only joined the Church in middle life, was at once placed in the highest office. Being fifty years old when he commenced the Christian profession and ministry, he could not, during the few remaining years of his troubled life, adequately acquaint himself with the history, literature, and best traditions of Christianity. But he has become the 'guide, philosopher, and friend' of the sacerdotal party in the 'catholic Church.' He happened to be caught with the idea that the Christian ministry is the natural successor of the Jewish priesthood. Whatever is said in the Old Testament of the Levitical priests, he concluded to have a further application to Christian priests. Since the priests of Israel were chosen in sight of all the people, so ought bishops.[1] They who resist the priest, or who attend the services of a bishop under censure, are liable to the charge of Korah and his company.[2] 'The bishop is in the Church, and the Church is in the bishop; if any one be not with the bishop, he is not in the Church. . . . The Church is catholic and one,

[1] Epistle lxvii. (*Ant.-N. Lib.*, viii., 238).

[2] Epistle lxvii., 4 (*Ant.-N. Lib.*, viii., 239). The influence of this opinion, that the priests should be governed by Levitical regulations, is stamped upon the *Apostolical Constitutions and Canons; e.g.* Canon 63 forbids the presbyter to eat flesh with blood.

is not cut nor divided, but is indeed connected and bound together by the cement of priests who cohere with one another.'

This is Cyprianism — not Christianity. It is not the theology either of Paul or of Peter; of the Apostle John, or of Barnabas, or of Clement. But it has ministered to the intolerance and exclusiveness of Romanism and Episcopalianism through all their fateful history. The teachings of Christ have been kept in the background; the doctrines of Paul have been discouraged; and this half-instructed, dogmatic bishop of Carthage has been made ecclesiastical dictator to the heritage of the Lord. When the Christian world really awakes to understand the impositions which have been inflicted upon it, the homage paid to the word of Cyprian, through so many ages, will seem to have been one of the most astonishing and mournful facts of the history.[1] Though the Anglicans are careful to point out the passages which have been tampered with in the interests of Rome, yet his writings are a two-edged sword in their hand. The 'unity' upon which he insists has its centre on the banks of the Tiber.

[1] A very clear account of Cyprian and his writings is given by Dr. Benson (now Archbishop of Canterbury) in Smith's *Dict. C. Biog.*, but we wish more had been said in correction of his errors.

CHAPTER VI.

UNITY AND CATHOLICITY—(*continued*).

'Whoever he may be, and whatever he may be, he who is not in the Church of Christ, is not a Christian.'[1]

'I believe *in one Catholic and Apostolic Church.*'[2]

It has not been without some reason that Protestants, and especially the more evangelical sections of the Protestant Church, have been charged with the neglect of Christian antiquity. With the New Testament in our hands, and the presence of the ever-gracious Spirit of God in our hearts and assemblies, we have been content to know but little of the bygone experience of the Church. Besides, since the Romanist set up the 'Fathers' on a level with, or even higher than Scripture, the Protestant has been in danger of disparaging the testimony of the ancient ecclesiastical writers.[3]

In our own case, God had set before our fathers 'a great door and effectual' in many lands, and they could not spare time for curious investigations into patristic literature, or for unnecessary controversy. Wesley, by his prepossessions and circumstances, was constrained to acquaint himself

[1] Cyprian, *Ep.* li., 24. [2] *Nicene Creed.*

[3] Dr. Donaldson (*Apostolic Fathers*, p. 73) says that 'the Evangelical school in this country has not produced one first-rate work on early Christian literature,' nor advanced a step beyond Daillé (*De Usu Patrum*), and Milton (*Prelatical Episcopacy*).

largely with the facts of Christian history, and with the views of the early writers. But the practical demands of his situation prevented him from being wholly absorbed in the study of antiquity. He did what he could, by the publication of his *Ecclesiastical History*, to make his people acquainted with the facts. In his *Christian Library* he furnished a magnificent contribution to their instruction in the views of the most pious and earnest writers of the Church in every age.[1] But, since his day, our ecclesiastical disquisitions have not multiplied very much.[2] But, since we have entered into an entirely independent position as a Church, we cannot evade the claim to a more thorough examination of our case in comparison with that of the first ages of the Church. 'The Philistines are upon' us. They seek to reap our harvests—to pull down that which we have builded. They seek to distract the members of our churches by telling them that 'except' they observe their 'custom' (τὸ ἔθος), they 'cannot be saved.' It is necessary, therefore, that we should enquire what foundation our view of Christianity really has. If we have 'neglected antiquity,' let us amend the fault, if we can. And at any rate, there may be

[1] *The Christian Library*, 50 vols., by J. Wesley, A.M., Bristol, 1749. The preface is appropriately dated from Kingswood. The first volume contains extracts from the *Apost. Fathers*. Several of these, he says, 'lived in apostolic times, and were chosen by apostles to preside in their several sees.' 'Their writings are not of equal authority with the Holy Scriptures, yet are worthy of a much greater respect than any compositions which have been made since.' Vols. 2 and 3 are occupied with Arndt's *True Christianity*, and with Foxe's *Martyrs*. A second edition, with Wesley's emendations, was published by the Rev. T. Jackson, A.D. 1820. (See Tyerman's *Life of J. Wesley*, ii., 65.)

[2] We do not overlook the important works of Benson, Watson, Clarke, and Moulton, in biblical and theological scholarship; nor such as those of Dr. Etheridge, in Syriac literature, and of Rich. Treffry on *The Eternal Sonship*, and many others.

lessons of warning, or of inspiration, which will repay us for our toil.[1]

On the further consideration of this question of 'unity,' our enquiries must be brief. If we go back to the beginning, we find the Church in Jerusalem, immediately after the days of Peter, under the care of St. James. Tradition says that he held the position of President until the eve of the destruction of the city.[2] Probably all Jewish Christians looked to him as their head.[3] The only account left of him intimates that he continued to be a strict observer of the Jewish law.[4] As such, could he eat with a Gentile? Could any Gentile Christians in Jerusalem or Palestine have received any countenance from him? But before 70 A.D. James died a martyr's death. Then came the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. Sacrifices have not been offered since, and the priesthood became obsolete. For many years after the destruction of Jerusalem no Jew was allowed to come near to it. Even when the city was partially restored by Hadrian, the Jews were excluded. When, once more, the Christian Church reappeared in Ælia-Capitolina, a Gentile, named Marcus, is said to have been bishop. But this Church in Jerusalem was always feeble and unproductive. Church writers have not cared to repro-

[1] 'Die Kunde der Vergangenheit der Kirche wird dem Christen zur Erbauung sein.' (*Die Lehre v. h. Geiste,* von K. A. Kahnis, 1847.)

[2] This may be the atom of truth contained in the Epistles of Peter and Clement to James, prefixed to the Clementines. Wordsworth (Bp. of St. Andrews), in his *Remarks on Dr. Lightfoot's Essay,* refers to Epiphanius and Chrysostom to prove that our Lord's appearance to James (1 Cor. xv. 7) was to make him Bishop of Jerusalem! He thinks that Eusebius and *Apostolical Constitutions* prove him to have been bishop. Wordsworth had been alarmed by Dean Stanley's statement that 'all the bishops of the second century must have been created by the presbyters of the first.'

[3] Gal. ii. 12.

[4] Hegesipp. in Euseb., ii., 23.

duce its traditions. 'The Christians of Jerusalem contribute nothing to this written portraiture of the age. The peculiarities of their belief were borrowed from a conventional system destined to pass away, and did not embody the permanent characteristics of any particular type of apostolic doctrine. The Jewish Church at Pella was an accommodation, if we may use the word, and not a form of Christianity.'[1] This is rather a sad account to give of Jerusalem Christians who had had James for 'bishop,' and who owed their lives to Christian prophecy. But history shows how they adhered to their Jewish tenets on the shores of the Dead Sea, and how their communities became the seed-plots of Ebionitism, of the earlier Gnosticism, and of many anti-christian theories. If apostolical succession could have saved any, it would have saved them.[2]

For nearly thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, as we have said, there are no documents to give us light on the formation of the Church, except the Epistle of Clement of Rome, usually dated from 94–100 A.D.[3] It is a letter addressed by the Church of Rome to the Church at Corinth.[4] Clement does not say that he is the Bishop

[1] Westcott, on *Canon*, p. 59.

[2] It will be remembered that in Irenæus and Tertullian the chief value of the 'Apostolical Succession' is that it ensures correct doctrine. This is the boast of infallibilists and their imitators still.

[3] 'A few letters of consolation and warning, two or three epistles addressed to the heathen, a controversy with a Jew, a vision and a scanty gleaning of fragments of lost works, comprise all Christian literature up to the middle of the second century' (Westcott, on *Canon*, p. 11).

[4] The Tübingen writers generally question the genuineness of the Epistle of Clement, because 'dieser Name in zweiten Jahrhundert die Bedeutung einer Vermittlerrolle zwischen Judenchristenthum und Heidenchristenthum bekommen hat' (Schwegler, *Nachap.*, ii., 125). Even Renan does not accept this view; yet 'traditions which belong to very different men were soon united to confirm the dignity of the successor of St. Peter' (Westcott, on

of Rome, nor does he address a bishop in Corinth. He speaks of two classes of ministers who had been appointed by the apostles, bishops = presbyters, and deacons. He says that the Church had displaced some presbyters or bishops without reason. Yet, if we read between the lines, we may just discern what the offence of these bishops, against whose rule the Corinthian Church had revolted, had been. There had evidently been a straining of ministerial prerogative, and the Church had rebelled. In his notice of the matter, Clement uses language which, by unfair manipulation, is made the earliest warrant for the doctrine of 'Apostolic Succession.' Any Romish or Anglican author will show how Clement's sketch can be extended to mediæval proportions.[1] He says:[2] 'Our apostles also knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife on account of the office of the episcopate.[3] For this reason, therefore, inasmuch as they

Canon, p. 22). For the literary history of the Epistle, see Schaff, *Hist. of Ch.* (100–325), p. 636, and Lightfoot's *St. Clement.* The uncertainty which attaches to 'Apostolical Succession' is illustrated in the case of Clement. According to some (the Clementines, Tertullian, Jerome, etc.), he was appointed Bishop of Rome by Peter, and was his immediate successor. According to others (Iren. *Hær.*, iii., 3; Euseb. iii. 2, 13, 31), Linus and Cletus preceded him, and Clement was not bishop until *circ.* A.D. 100. Is it likely that a presbyter appointed by Peter, who died A.D. 64, would write an epistle to Corinth in A.D. 94? Dr. Salmon (Smith's *Dict. of Ch. Biog.*) discredits the 'tale of Clement's ordination by Peter,' but refers to the mention of his name in the Romish *Canon of the Mass*, which recites the names 'Linus, Cletus, Clemens' to this day. This is anything but 'authentic proof.' It certainly weighs in favour of the Jewish origin of Clement, that the *Homilies*, *Recognitions*, and the *Constitutions* were ascribed to him. This will account also for his supposed ordination by Peter. See Ritschl, *Entstehung*, pp. 261, 263—who regards his views as Pauline, or rather a coalition of the two schools.

[1] *E.g.* Nirschl, *Patrologie.*

[2] *Ep. Clem.*, c. 44.

[3] Literally, 'about the name of the oversight;' ἔριδος ἔσεσθαι ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος τῆς

had obtained a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed these [ministers] already mentioned, and afterwards gave instructions[1] that when these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed them in the ministry.[2] We are of opinion, therefore, that these appointed by them, or afterward by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole Church, and who have blamelessly served the flock of Christ, in a humble, peaceable and disinterested spirit, and have for a long time possessed the good opinion of all, cannot be justly dismissed from the ministry. For our sin will not be small if we eject from the episcopate those who have blamelessly and holily fulfilled its duties.[3] Blessed are those presbyters who, having finished their course, have obtained a fruitful and perfect departure; for they have no fear lest any one deprive them of the place now appointed them. But we see that ye have removed some men of excellent behaviour from the ministry which they fulfilled blamelessly and with honour.'

From all this, it seems to be very clear that by 'Apostolic Succession,' according to Clement, is only meant that all ministers, called of God, anointed by the Holy Spirit, and approved of the Church, succeeded the

ἐπισκοπῆς. The reference is clearly to the disputes about pre-eminence, Matt. xviii. 1, etc.

[1] Cf. *Ep. Clem.*, 42: 'They appointed the first-fruits [of their labour], having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons.'

[2] λειτουργία = service.

[3] It is literally 'those who have offered the gifts:' προσενέγκοντας τὰ δῶρα. The idea of 'sacrifice' in the Eucharist began with the presents made by the richer members of the Church, for the benefit of the poor, at the Agape. The collection at the 'love-feast' and at the 'Lord's Supper' still commemorates these offerings. By those who write in the sacerdotal interest the expression is supposed to favour the doctrine of a 'sacrifice' in the Eucharist. But 'the idea of sacrifice in the Lord's Supper was added in the third century furtively' (Pope's *Compendium*, iii., 329).

apostles. The presbyter or elder is evidently the same officer as the bishop or overseer. He does not absolutely challenge the right of the Church of Corinth to dismiss their minister, though he condemns their doing so for insufficient causes. In other places he makes a reference to the Jewish priesthood, comparing the Christian ministry with it. These passages also have become famous in the controversy with sacerdotalism. In c. 43, he says that Moses appointed the tribe of Levi to priestly office, in order to prevent 'sedition in Israel.' He says (c. 40), 'It behoves us to do all things in order, which the Lord has commanded us to perform at stated times. He has enjoined offerings and service to be performed, and that not thoughtlessly or irregularly, but at the appointed times and hours. Where and by whom He desires these things to be done, He Himself has fixed by His own supreme will, in order that all things being piously done according to His good pleasure, may be acceptable unto Him. Those, therefore, who present their offerings at the appointed times are accepted and blessed; for inasmuch as they follow the laws of the Lord, they sin not. For his own peculiar services are assigned to the high priest, and their own proper place is ascribed to the priests, and their own special ministrations devolve on the Levites. The layman (ὁ λαϊκός) is bound by the laws that pertain to laymen.'[1]

This passage, undoubtedly, is a declaration in favour of Church order. Christian worship, like the temple worship, should be orderly and at stated times. Under the law of

[1] The Bishop of Winchester thinks it 'a most happy circumstance that the very earliest of the Fathers, Clem. Rom., *the companion of St. Paul*, has left us clear testimony on this head' (*Thirty-Nine Articles*, p. 542).

Moses there were Priests and Levites; under Christ's law there are bishop-presbyters and deacons. Yet we are not to infer that he attributes sacerdotal functions to Christian ministers. He does not identify the priests of the new dispensation with the priests of the old. This is an extravagance for which we must look centuries later. There are many explanations needed in order that we may arrive at the exact meaning of these statements. He says there are 'appointed times' for Christian service. Were these the same as the Jewish? or does he refer to the 'Lord's day,' or to the morning or evening Eucharist? He speaks of the 'laws of the Lord' which the true presbyters follow. What and where are these laws? Moreover, in reading such a document as this, we must always remember that the authority is not of the highest. We cannot give full credit to everything under the name of Clement that it belongs to the first Christian century.

Over the writings which come next in order there has been great controversy. Of the Epistles of St. Ignatius, fifteen were first printed as his genuine compositions. Very soon eight of them were rejected by the learned as manifest forgeries, and especially because they had not been mentioned by Eusebius. The remaining seven were known in two versions. The longer of these recensions was again dishonoured in favour of the shorter (Vossian) version. This shorter version of the seven, in Greek, still retains its credit; but even of this, every Church writer of any position speaks with some hesitation. Dr. Lightfoot, evidently impressed by the learned and laborious researches of Zahn[1] and others, has changed his

[1] *Ignatius von Antiochen, von Theod. Zahn*, Gotha, 1873.

opinion during the last few years. In 1873, when the third edition of his work on the Philippians was published, he regarded the Syriac 'three' as the original form of the Epistles. Now he accepts the shorter Greek version of the 'seven.'[1] It is by these documents that Episcopacy will stand or fall. If we ask how it was that for so many ages it was supposed that episcopacy was the only Church government which was lawful in the Church of Christ—the answer would be, Because of the Epistles of Ignatius. Why has the Church governed by bishops claimed, throughout its history, the right to dictate the faith of the Church, and to persecute those who expressed an opposite opinion? Because of Ignatius. Why did the Anglican divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries repudiate presbyterian Christianity, and encourage acts of intolerance against Nonconformists? Because they could appeal to Ignatius. Why did Samuel Wesley and Susanna Annesley leave Nonconformity and return to the Church of England?[2] Why did John and Charles Wesley, to the last, retain so strong a veneration for the Episcopalian Church? How is it that in England the Tractarian and Puseyite movement acquired so much influence, and produced so much effect; and that so many educated

[1] See Lightfoot, *Philip.*, pp. 232–237; Dale's *Congreg. Princ.*, pp. 216–239; Harnack, *Die Zeit des Ignat.* (summary, p. 66), who shows how uncertain the traditions of Ignatius are. Hausrath (*Kleine Schriften*, p. 28), with other rationalists, holds that the pastoral epistles look at the same heresies as the epistles of Ignatius. Pfleiderer (Hibbert Lect., p. 256) calls them 'deutero-Pauline.' But such an argument might serve to show the antiquity of the Ignatian writings rather than the lateness of the pastoral epistles. Criticism is nothing if not critical. Dr. Lightfoot's new book on Ignatius is announced as this goes to the press.

[2] *Life and Times of Rev. S. Wesley, M.A.*, by Rev. L. Tyerman, London, 1866, p. 77.

persons have been led back to Rome during this generation? Why did the Bishop of Lincoln refuse the title of 'Reverend' to a Methodist preacher, and why are Dissenting ministers usually spoken of as 'unauthorized' and 'schismatic'? It is not too much to say that all this can be traced to the existence of the letters of St. Ignatius. If a companion and disciple of apostles, writing to Christian Churches in the very first years of the second century, could say with authority, that no Church was a Church without three distinct orders of ministers, who had received their authorization and appointment and heavenly anointing from the apostles,[1] then we are all wrong. But, in this case, so was St. Paul.[2]

Ignatius says: 'Let us be careful, then, not to set ourselves in opposition to the bishop, in order that we may be subject to God.'[3] 'We should look upon the bishop even as we look upon the Lord Himself.'[4] 'Let all reverence the deacons as an appointment of Jesus Christ, and the bishop as Jesus Christ, who is the Son of the Father, and the presbyters as the sanhedrim of God, and assembly of the apostles. Apart from these there is no Church.'[5]

[1] Dr. Haddan (Smith's *Dict. of Christ. Antiq.*, art. 'Bishop') shows how much is made of this authority: 'The bishop came in room of apostles, having presbyters and deacons and laity under him . . . possessing exclusive powers of ordination . . . from the earliest years of the second century, from Ignatius downwards.'

[2] The influence which the Epistles of Ignatius have had in the Church, has been greatly owing to the strong individuality of the writer. See Rothe, *Anfänge*, p. 4; Zahn's *Ignat. v. Antioch.*, Pref., vii; Burton's *Eccl. Hist.*, p. 311, etc.

[3] *Ad Ephes.*, c. 5. [4] *Ibid.*, c. 6.

[5] *Ad Trall.*, c. 3. Ignatius regarded the presbyters as the successors of the apostles, the bishops were in the place of the Master. Fairly interpreted, there is little in these extracts which is inconsistent with a true evangelical system.

'Continue in intimate union with Jesus Christ our God and the bishop, and the enactments of the apostles. He that is within the altar is pure, but he that is without is not pure: that is, he who does anything apart from the bishop and presbyters and deacons is not pure in his conscience.'[1] If such utterances as these were authoritative over Christians, there would be an end of controversy. If they are not authoritative, why are they yet employed as if their doctrine was of God?

It was Daillé, a French Protestant, who first challenged these fateful documents. He was replied to by Bishop Pearson; and Anglican writers generally assume that Pearson's reply in favour of the shorter Greek recension was final; but *adhuc lis sub judice*.[2] Bishop Lightfoot[3] allows that in the New Testament 'bishop' and 'presbyter' are convertible, and that this is the case with

[1] *Ad Trall.*, 7. The expression καὶ τ. διαταγμάτων τ. ἀποστόλων savours of a later time—perhaps that of the *Constitutions of Apostles*.

[2] Dr. Cureton (see Killen, *Anc. Chu.*, p. 14) said that he never met with any one who had read Pearson's work through. We do not pretend to have waded through the voluminous Latin essay which Pearson was six years in writing, but will here translate its first sentences—*ex ungue leonem:* 'The controversy respecting the distinction of the episcopal order from the presbyterate, or, respecting the origin of that distinction, is celebrated, especially in our age. In its discussion the authority of St. Ignatius, an apostolic man and a martyr, is worthy of great weight; so, in short, it has come to pass that they who cannot in any other way maintain a hostile opinion of episcopacy, wrench away all the epistles of Ignatius, deny them to have been written by the holy martyr, pronounce them to have been feigned and false, since by their eloquent testimony the episcopal cause is supported, and the antiquity of presbyterian parity falls.' (*Vindiciæ Epistolarum S. Ignatii*, in the work of Cotelerius, *S. S. Patrum qui temporibus apostolicis floruerunt*, 1698.) Killen quotes from Usher's dissertation prefixed to Polycarp and Ignatius, this sentence: 'Concludimus . . . nullas omni ex parte sinceras esse habendas et genuinas.' This refers to the shorter text.

[3] *Ep. to Philip.*, p. 96.

Clement, who wrote at the end of the first century. But in Ignatius, Dr. Lightfoot says, '"bishop" is used in the modern sense.' That is, down to the end of the first Christian century the government of the Church was presbyterian. That was the unity. But early in the second century a new 'unity' was initiated, that of government by 'bishops in the modern sense.'[1]

But further, these epistles of Ignatius assert that it was 'a sin to Judaize.' 'It is absurd to profess Christ Jesus and to Judaize.'[2] 'If we still live according to the Jewish law, we acknowledge that we have not received grace.'[3] 'If any one preach the Jewish law unto you, listen not to him.'[4] It is somewhat difficult to believe that a bishop of Antioch would so speak at the beginning of the second century. Peter had a following there as well as Paul, and Euodius, the first bishop, is said to have been appointed

[1] Canon Westcott says: 'The epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians, his pastoral epistles, and the epistles of Clement and Ignatius, when taken together, mark a harmonious progression in the development of the idea of a Church.' But does not this go too far? There is 'progression' historically connected between Paul and Ignatius. But Paul's idea of unity is that which Dr. Westcott here describes it: 'the body of Christ in virtue of the one life which it derives from Him who is its Head.' If in John x. 16 (see *Speaker's Commentary*) it is objected to the Roman unity that personal fellowship with Christ is that which places us in His flock, and not submission to any earthly authority; so here we may contend for the same truth. Every believer in Christ, having life in the Head of the Church, is in the Church. Ignatius says, on the contrary, that he who is not with the bishop is not with Christ. Though many Anglicans shrink from the conclusion, there are those who do not hesitate to say that 'life' in Christ only comes through the Church, *i.e.* through the bishops. Paul's doctrine of a Church, therefore, and that of Ignatius, are not 'harmonious.' The one makes fellowship with Christ only necessary to membership in His Church; the other makes membership in a society governed by bishops to be necessary to (1) life in Christ, (2) membership in the Church. This is the πρῶτος ψεῦδος of Ignatius: *facilis descensus Averni.*

[2] *Ad Magn.*, c. 10. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 8. [4] *Ad Philad.*, c. 6.

by him. If Ignatius only represented the Gentile Christians, it would explain very much. But in this case what would become of his 'catholicity'? He is the first to use that expression about which all Christendom is still contending. He says: 'Where Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic Church.' Did catholicity begin then by the exclusion of Jews from the Christian community? Is 'catholicism' after all a *lucus a non lucendo?* Did this form of Christianity, which then and ever since has claimed the attribute of 'universality,' begin its extraordinary career by shutting out from the Church of Christ the countrymen and fellow-religionists of Jesus and His apostles? It may be said that the Jewish believers were exorbitant in their demands, and exclusive on their side, so that it was necessary to suppress them.[1] It seemed to have become desirable that all Christians should cease to be dependent upon the synagogues where 'Moses was read every Sabbath day,' and that they should meet together on the 'Lord's day.'[2] But the Church forfeited its Pauline 'catholicity' when these expedient regulations were insisted upon.

It is one of the most difficult questions in Church history, and one which urgently needs further investigation, of the most serious kind, how and when the Church,

[1] 'The Judaizing party naturally made a last effort to retain their original power. . . . The struggle was not for independence, but for dominion. The Gentile Christians no longer claimed tolerance, but supremacy.' (Westcott, on *Canon*, p. 67.) The Jews cursed Christians in their synagogues in the time of Justin (*Dial. c. T.*, 16), though they had lost the power to lay hands on them, he says. Persecutors do not lose their spirit always with their power.

[2] 'No longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's day.' (Ignat. *ad Magn.*, c. 9.) Cf. Heb. x. 25; *Ep. Barnab.*, c. 15: διὸ καὶ ἄγομεν τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ὀγδόην.

which had consisted of Jewish and Gentile believers, was dispossessed of its Judaistic elements.[1] As long as the old ideas of catholicity prevailed, there was little chance of making progress with such an enquiry. Everything must be sacrificed to the idea of the infallibility and the unity of the Church. The voices of the Fathers must be regarded as a perfect harmony. They always spoke with a *sensus communis* in which even Scripture must be interpreted. It was deemed almost profane when it was proposed to study the life of a Father like Justin or Irenæus, to examine all the circumstances of his life and times, in order to judge what he was likely to say, to be able to interpret what he had said, and to decide whether sayings attributed to him were genuine or not. It is only within

[1] 'No one can possibly ignore the demands which this the most important period of the history of the Christian Church still puts forward for historical investigation. It is confessed on all hands that a great task still confronts us here, and that many questions still await a more satisfactory solution than has hitherto been found for them. Even if we take the best and most accepted works on the history of primitive Christianity, and examine them with a view to see how far they succeed in combining the historical materials, which are of so heterogeneous nature, and have to be collected from such different quarters, to the unity of a whole, how isolated, fragmentary, how destitute of minor principles and motives, how vague and dim do they appear in many respects!' (*Church Hist. of First Three Centuries*, by Dr. F. C. Baur; Pref., p. xi., date 1853. Transl. by Menzies, 1878.) Baur's views were first propounded in a paper in 1831, on *The Origin of the Ebionites from the Essenes.* Then followed one on *The Christ Party in the Corinthian Congregation;* in 1835 an essay on the *Pastoral Epistles*, one on *Romans* in 1836. All his views were represented in his *Paulus* in 1845. Schwegler, his coadjutor, produced his *Nachapostolische Zeitalter* in 1846. This work attempts to give the correct account of the origin of every early Christian writing from the earliest Gospel down to the latest. The last, he says, was St. John's, marking the final combination of apostolic doctrine. Lechler (*Das Apostolische und das Nachapostolische Zeitalter*, 1857) has furnished the standard reply of German orthodoxy to the vain speculation of Baur and Schwegler. A new edition of Lechler's valuable work (in German) has been published this year; and Messrs. Clark have also announced a translation.

recent years that the great schism in primitive Christianity between Jewish and Gentile believers, out of which the Catholic Church arose, has been clearly recognised and studied. The Tübingen school of Baur, Schwegler, and others have distinguished themselves by their assertion that they had discovered the true history of the Church on this point. They contended that the original apostles were Ebionites and only followed the Jewish religion; that the tendency to universalism appeared first in Stephen, but was most thoroughly developed in St. Paul. Between the Petrine and the Pauline parties in the Christian Church they say there was 'a permanent cleft,' which in a later day, through the mediation of Gnosticism and Montanism, reached reconciliation in the Catholic Church. Gnosticism, which exaggerated the value of knowledge, and Montanism, which exaggerated that of feeling in religion, worked out the sober harmony of Catholicism between them. In all this, every one allows, there are elements of truth. But the original apostles did not differ on the essential points of Christian belief. 'They all preached one and the same Saviour, and therefore one and the same gospel.'[1] The attempt of the Tübingen critics to form a fresh genesis of the books of the New Testament, and even of the sub-apostolic literature, is now regarded as a failure.[2] The whole scheme has been vitiated by its philosophic aim, which has been to eliminate

[1] Donaldson, *The Apostolical Fathers*, p. 57.

[2] Notwithstanding the collapse of many German 'reconstructions,' they are still made. Hausrath (*Kleine Schriften*) relates that an Erlangen professor told his students that if they wanted to know in what street of Jerusalem, or at what hour of the morning or afternoon, any psalm was composed, they must go to Hitz'g!

the supernatural from Christianity, and to subjugate this glorious work of the living God to the doctrine of Hegelian evolution. No one accepts the theory now—not even Renan nor Hilgenfeld. Ritschl[1] and others, who were at first enamoured of a theory which promised to explain everything on the easy terms of natural causes, have been compelled to relinquish it. But what a demonstration of the condition of ecclesiastical science in Christendom it furnishes, that such a theory could be advanced in the name of the learning and discovery of the nineteenth century! Into what a night of shadows and groping had tradition and prescription brought the Church, when it was possible to produce such a picture of its origin! But is there not a cause? Rome had all the sources of the history in her hands for more than a thousand years. During that time, the ignorance of some, and the bigotry of others, weeded out of the libraries of Christendom much that would militate against her claims. We must not make needless or thoughtless accusations of 'corruption' of writings, but there is no doubt much to be known upon this subject yet.[2] But the progress of Protestant enquiry

[1] Albrecht Ritschl, Doctor Philos. and Theol. Professor in the University of Bonn, author of *Die Entstehung der Altkatholischen Kirche*. The first edition in 1851 evinced much sympathy with the main theory of Baur and Schwegler. In his second edition, 1857, he opposes it at most points. See Dr. Lightfoot's note on the value of his work, *Ep. to Philip.*, p. 186. Dr. O. Pfleiderer, in his Hibbert Lecture, 1885, admits that Schwegler's extreme adhesion to preconceived views vitiated his criticism. Dr. Pfleiderer, however, is thoroughly rationalistic in his own principles, though at some points he comes nearer to evangelical sentiments.

[2] 'The spirit of falsehood which has so long been at work in the dark precincts of the Romish Curia has not yet fulfilled its course, nor have all its shameful secrets even yet been brought out into the open light of day.' (Curteis, *Church and Dissent*, 1872, p. 160.) 'The Roman Church is

into the real circumstances of the primitive Church has been so seriously embarrassed by false theories of 'unity,' of sacramental efficacy, of episcopal authority, that the work of the Reformation in Europe has to be recommenced.[1] We need not be surprised that the Jesuits have been able to recover so much ground in Germany, in Bavaria, in France, or even in England. The work of perversion, by which a son of Charles Wesley was drawn into the Romish Church, and which yet proceeds among youths at our Universities, has been only too easy. Newman, Wilberforce, Manning, and hundreds more of the English clergy and gentry, have betrayed the power which the old dream of 'Catholic Unity' yet exercises upon the classes which represent the principle of reaction against modern progress. But the spirit of the Reformation has not failed, though at times it has slumbered and slept. The Tübingen school did but temporarily represent, and in a somewhat grotesque manner, enquiries which must arise. These questions have arisen; and the result will in time make it impossible that an instructed man should be a Romanist, or else that he should not be a Romanist. History and common sense must decide between those who say that 'the Episcopate is not only necessary to the *bene esse* of the Church, but to its *esse*,'[2] and those who say that 'Christians have a free

honeycombed through and through with accumulated falsehood.' (Littledale's *Plain Reasons*, etc.)

[1] 'Historians have long been familiar with the literary forgeries which have been undertaken in the interests of the Papacy; but a collateral depravation of historical records in the interests of Episcopacy has been almost, if not entirely, overlooked.' (Mossman's *Hist. of the Cath. Ch.*, 1873.)

[2] Canon Liddon. So Sherlock (*Vindic. of Eccles. Authority*, p. 442): 'I will never value those men's judgments . . . who can be contented to change the apostolical order of bishops for a presbyterian parity.'

right of association in the name of Christ.'[1] No authority can settle that question now. The result we do not fear; though it will either place the Episcopal 'unity' on unassailable foundations, or will prove it to be an impracticable anachronism.

Meanwhile, the Methodists bear their own witness to the great principle of unity by their connexionalism. As soon as societies were formed in London, Bristol and Newcastle, they were called 'United Societies.' Like the early Christians they called one another 'Brethren.'[2] Christians of other Churches still wonder at the solidarity and cohesion of our fellowship. Methodists, everywhere, easily fraternize, and promptly find mutual understanding. Though now the great family of Wesley's spiritual descendants is divided into branches, which are placed under separate and independent Conferences, this bond of fellowship is not broken. A variation from the usual type of Church government, like that of the episcopacy of

[1] Dr. Hatch in *Contemp. Rev.*, June, 1885. Compare Dr. Liddon's statement, 'Upon a true Episcopalian succession the validity of our chief means of communion with our Lord depends,' with Dr. Lightfoot's statement (*Ep. to Philip.*, p. 180), 'The Kingdom of Christ . . . is free. It has no sacred days or seasons, no special sanctuaries, because every time and place are holy. Above all it has no sacerdotal system. It interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man, by whose intervention alone God is reconciled and man forgiven. Each individual member holds personal communion with the Divine Head.' We do not doubt the sincerity of either of these learned and pious men, of whom all Christians are proud. But to claim the submission of Dissenters to the Anglican unity while such fundamental differences exist between different sections of the Church, would be hypocrisy. To yield such submission on our part would be little less.

[2] Just. Mart. *Apol.*, i., 65: 'There is then brought to that one of the brethren who presides (τῷ προεστῶτι τ. ἀδελφῶν) bread, and a cup of water and wine.' Tertull. *Apol.*, 39: 'They are wroth with us because we call each other brethren.' Cl. Alex. *Strom.*, ii., 9: 'We call those brethren who are regenerated by the same word.'

Methodism in the United States, does not spoil our unity. Even the formation of separate connexions, such as that of the 'Primitive Methodists,' or of the 'Methodist Free Church,' has not wrecked it. To those who say 'that the Congregational polity is at once the highest and the most natural organization of the life of the Christian Church,'[1] we can but reply that we do not so understand the original records. Those who insist upon some external authority which should govern all Churches, we have already endeavoured to answer. But towards the final 'unity' of all the Churches, which the Lord shall establish in His own way and time, we look with all the faithful; and humbly think that our 'connexionalism' may be no unimportant element in realizing this great consummation.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VI.

'The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.'

A work under the above title was published in the year 1883, by Bryennius, Patriarch of Nicomedia. It had been found by him in a library in Constantinople. This copy was written in Jerusalem by Leo, 'Notary and Sinner,' A.D. 1056. Along with it were MSS. of the epistles of Barnabas, Clement, Ignatius, etc. Some parts of this treatise are found word for word in the epistles of Barnabas, in *Hermas*, and especially in the *Apost. Constit.*, bk. 7. The critics have generally decided that it is earlier than any of these.[2] Bishop Lightfoot assigns it to an

[1] Dale's *Manual of Cong. Princ.*, p. 8. Cf. Dr. Rigg's *Connexional Economy of Methodism* (1879), p. 6.

[2] See Romestin, Canon Spence, Hitchcock and Brown, Zahn, Harnack, and Hilgenfeld, who have published treatises or articles upon it.

Alexandrian Christian who lived before A.D. 112. He does this—

1. Because it speaks of two orders only, bishops and deacons. He holds that Asiatic Christians already recognised three orders of ministers; but in Alexandria the transition from presbyterianism to episcopacy was later. For two hundred years after Christ, the bishops of Alexandria were elected and ordained by presbyters. Romestin, with others, thinks that there are traces of Asiatic or Syriac opinion in it. But this would raise a difficulty. It would imply that some Syrian Christians held with Ignatius to three orders, while others followed the *Teaching* with two. Harnack, etc., find other traces of the Alexandrian impress.

2. This treatise does not distinguish between the Agape and the Eucharist. This is the case also in the epistles of Ignatius. 'It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptize or to celebrate the love-feast' (*ἀγάπην ποιεῖν*, Ign. *ad Sm.*, viii). 'It were better to observe the love-feast' (*ἀγαπᾶν*—where the *A.-N. Lib.* strangely translates, 'to treat it with respect') 'that they may rise again.' The *Const. of the Apostles* does distinguish between the two observances. The seventh chapter of that work contains the greater part of the *Teaching*, with many alterations. Where the latter says: 'After ye are filled give thanks,' the former has: 'After ye have partaken give thanks' (for *τὸ ἐμπλησθῆναι* in the *Teaching*, the *A. C.* has *τὴν μετάληψιν*). The one refers to a meal, the other to a ceremonial. The Eucharist was the concluding act of worship at the simple, sacred meal in which the Christians joined at the close of the day. The bread and wine were passed round in memory of the death of Christ, in token of their fellowship in Him, until He came again. Bishop Lightfoot thinks that the two began to be separated about the time of the Bithynian persecution under Trajan. But the Agape survived for a century after this. It is described in

Tertullian, and even in the *Apost. Constit.* This relic of apostolicity, by a singular 'irony of fate,' has been bequeathed to the Moravians and Methodists. Churches which boast of their antiquity celebrate their Eucharist with wonderful pomp, but have little that would remind a Christian of the catacombs of the primitive κοινωνία. Bullinger (*De Origine Erroris*, 1539) refers to a survival in the Romish ritual of one of the original customs: 'Hinc fortassis ad nos ritus ille manavit qui etiam hodie in usu est ut finitis Missarum solennibus panes dividantur pauperibus.'

CHAPTER VII.

ORDER AND PROGRESS.

'METHODIST: one who lives according to the method laid down in the Bible.'[1]

'See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace.'[2]

IT has been said by one of the most thoughtful of the critics of Methodism, that this system 'did not so much violate as it rendered an homage to the principle of Church order. It stood forth . . . an eminent example of the prevalence and supremacy of *rules* . . . Methodism, in a word, was LAW, written upon the "fleshly tables" of thousands and thousands again of heretofore lawless hearts.'[3] 'To live by rule' was the distinguishing mark of the first Methodists. The strict monotony of their primitive devoutness gave them their name. These people did not live without an aim, waiting for whatever occupation or amusement the day might bring forth. They had a business in life; and laid out each hour that they might attend to it.

'One only thing resolved to know,
And square their useful lives below
By reason and by grace.'

[1] Wesley's *English Dictionary*. [2] Hymn 218.
[3] Taylor's *Wesley and Methodism*.

They learned how to live in the world, yet not to be of it. Theirs was not the monastic form of piety. This had prompted the penitent—anxious to escape the sinfulness over which he mourned; the believer—who desired to meditate on the glories of his new-found faith; the saint—who longed to rise higher on the ascending path of piety, to forsake the temptation and degradation and tumult of common society. But this people dared to return to the example of Christ and His apostles. They believed that 'entire sanctification' was attainable in a sinful world; and that 'perfect love' could prevail over everyday selfishness. Before Keble had said—

> 'We need not bid for cloistered cell
> Our neighbours and our friends farewell;'

the Methodists had been singing for a century—

> 'Not in the tombs we pine to dwell,
> Not in the dark monastic cell,
> By vows and grates confined;
> Freely to all ourselves we give,
> Constrained by Jesu's love to live
> The servants of mankind.'

It was not until the third century of the Christian era that the Church became enamoured of that old-world, oriental, and ascetic form of piety, which pretended to transcend common experience, and demanded solitude for its realization. Monasticism descended from Essenism, into which Pharisaic elements largely entered, from Gnostic and Manichean contempt of matter, and from the unevangelical views of the merit of good works. It could only arise when the example of Him 'who went about doing good' had been partially eclipsed by inferior types.[1] It

[1] τύπος διδαχῆς, Rom. vi. 17.

was entirely contrary to the teaching of St. Paul. He had taught Christians, while they 'set their affection on things above—where Christ was seated at the right hand of God,' that they must translate their heavenly contemplations and sympathies into the details of common life.[1] Husbands, parents, slaves, masters, must exhibit the 'resurrection-power' in the elevation of ordinary duties and relationships. There were, therefore, neither monks nor nuns for the first two centuries of Christian history. The first followers of Jesus of Nazareth were not hermits; the first apostles were not celibate monks. A bishop usually had 'one wife,' and the elder was expected to rule well his own house.

Moreover, the first Christians were chiefly persons of humble life. 'Not many wise, not many noble, not many mighty,' were called. The fishermen and publicans of Galilee were succeeded by the artisans, soldiers, labourers, and slaves of the Roman Empire. 'The Christian converts belonged mostly to the middle and lower classes of society, such as fishermen, peasants, mechanics, traders, freedmen, slaves. . . . And yet these poor illiterate Churches were the recipients of the noblest gifts, and alive to the deepest problems and highest thoughts which can challenge the attention of an immortal mind. Christianity built from the foundation upward. From the lower ranks come the rising men of the future, who constantly reinforce the higher ranks and prevent their decay.'[2] In that mass of corruption which filled Rome at the dawn of Christianity, the lower classes had no mission except to minister to the pride or lust of their masters. What a benign operation

[1] Col. iii. [2] Schaff's *Hist. of the Ch.* (1–100 A.D.), p. 197.

commenced when the abject and outcast began to realize that he was a responsible being, a son of God, an heir of life![1] How soon the effect was felt upon society when soldiers began to be honest and peaceful, women clothed themselves in stainless modesty, when God raised up 'children unto Abraham out of the stones' of Paganism! Heathen masters began to reckon on the fidelity of Christian servants, generals began to rely upon Christian legions, employers found labourers patient under reproof, diligent in toil, honest in stewardship. 'These Christians,' says Pliny, 'bound themselves by an oath not to steal, to commit adultery, or any other crime.' Though they were 'obstinate' in their creed, yet they were gentle under persecution, and were loyal to governors.

The mission of Methodism among the masses of our countrymen has been not dissimilar to that which the early Church had in the decaying Roman world. It is freely confessed how much it has done for the moral renewal of the people, and therefore for the social invigoration of the country. We need not refer to the numerous authorities who speak of the moral deterioration of the nation at the beginning of the last century. William Law, in his *Serious Call*, says that in his day two out of every three Englishmen were habitual swearers. 'It was just at the time when we wanted little of filling up the measure of our iniquities that two or three clergymen of the Church of England began vehemently to call sinners to repentance.'[2] Then, and since, our mission has been principally among the lower classes of society. Our chief constituency is among the toiling multitudes. And what

[1] Storr, *The Divine Orig. of Ch.*, p. 84. [2] Wesley's *Appeal*, Pt. ii.

have we taught them? To be discontented, and litigious; to despise authorities, to resist 'the Power'? If we had been intent upon political and social influence, none can deny our opportunity of obtaining it. Some wonder why we have allowed this opportunity to lapse. Why have we not in times of disaffection incited the people to avenge their miseries upon their superiors?[1] Why have we not, at any time, plied the popular feeling, which has been at our command, against rulers and dignities, who have showed us little sympathy and sometimes damaging opposition?[2] England to-day might have been worse than Ireland, if Methodism had sought to be a political agency, and had yielded itself to the spirit of faction. And if we are asked why we have not done so, we answer: Because we had before us the example of the primitive Christians. We have been followers of the early Church. We intend to follow them still—'to fear God, to honour the king;' to make 'supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, for all men; for kings and all that are in high places; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.'[3]

We yet bear the reproach that our form of Christianity is seldom found except among the lower classes. 'It is a

[1] 'I lived from 1818 to 1825 at Chester, which is on the border of a district where the Wesleyans are very numerous; and I was no stranger to the exemplary and loyal conduct of many of their ministers at the time when great distress and agitation prevailed in the manufacturing districts.' (Letter from Rev. Geo. Pearson, B.D., Christian Advocate, University of Cambridge, to Rev. T. Jackson, 1834: see *Jackson's Life*, p. 272.)

[2] It would be interesting to trace out the part which Methodism has taken in the abolition of slavery in the West Indies, and in the United States.

[3] 1 Tim. ii. 1-3.

religion of shopkeepers and servants.'[1] Notwithstanding our undoubted progress in wealth and standing and cultivation, which has been slower, however, than some suppose, we gather few from the higher ranks of English society.[2] We have not a single representative in the House of Lords, where the highest wealth and attainments of our country congregate,[3] or on the whole bench of the judges. We have only a small, though not undistinguished, band in the House of Commons. We are sparsely represented in the county magistracy, somewhat more abundantly in municipalities; but the professional and educated classes of our country, generally, behold us afar off. The progress made by means of our own institutions has been necessarily

[1] The *Times* newspaper.

[2] Mr. Abbey says: 'Methodism can never make any deep impression upon the cultivated classes. It can, at best, be only the Church of the poor and of the lower middle classes;—a great evil in itself, seeing that it is not the least considerable function of a Christian Church to cement together into one union and fellowship all classes of society. But, with very few exceptions, men of high education and social standing will necessarily stand aloof from a society in which religion is presented to them in what they think a crude and unattractive form, and in which learning and culture are generally, and perhaps unavoidably, neglected.' (Abbey and Overton, *Eng. Ch.*, i., 422.) The very same things could have been said against early Christianity.

'Dr. Mitchell enumerates a population of 5000 souls with 30 beer-shops, but without a church or chapel save the meeting-house of the indefatigable Wesleyan, who has been in those regions the only Protestant missionary . . . Our Protestant system has been defective in its machinery . . . and moreover the upper classes of Englishmen have scarcely dared to be the companions of the poorer orders of society, however meritorious their claims as distributors of charity . . . The Wesleyan has followed them in every village, and gone from cottage to cottage, to leave in person his tract and his discipline. Hence, the English colliers, where they have any religion at all, are Methodists.' (*Quart. Rev.*, June, 1842.)

[3] 'Cowper consecrated the example of Lord Dartmouth, the only nobleman who represented Methodism at the Court,—the "one who wore a coronet and prayed."' (Stevens' *Hist. of Meth.*, ii., p. 96.) But other members of the aristocracy evinced close sympathy with Methodism, as the Countess of Huntingdon, Lady Maxwell, etc.

slow; and until recent years we have been denied any share in the advantages of the national universities. But what then? Are we thereby become unapostolical? Was it not thus with early Christianity itself? Only *individuals* belonging to the upper classes of Roman society joined the Christian Church during the first three centuries of its progress. The aristocracy came in when it became a great popular power, and emperors began to recognise it. The training and habits of these classes usually unfit them for buffeting, reproach, 'the loss of all things;' they cannot endure that close sympathetic contact with the multitude of a suffering world, to which Christ has called His people. As long as an opinion or profession is opposed to custom and social prestige, it must be content with the suffrages of the lowly. Methodism has really grown in social recognition quite as rapidly as did the original Church. Perhaps it would not be so well with us if the sons and daughters of fashion counted it no dishonour to bear our name.

But it would be a serious matter if Methodism had shown no capacity for association with higher thought and advancing science, or for the highest modes of social refinement. We cannot take sides with the infallibility which says to all demands of modern inquiry, *Non possumus*, and which anathematizes mental progress. There would be something in this reproach of native meanness and ignominy, if Methodism had never evinced any sympathy with intellectual and social elevation. But a development of religious life which began among the advanced students of the University of Oxford—and had for its first representative a Fellow of Lincoln and a

scholar of Christ Church—can scarcely be charged with an inalienable association with ignorance. It was not until the clergy deliberately refused to co-operate with Wesley that he called his assistants to the 'Conference,' and made them an inseparable part of it. Amongst these he found men who were better taught in Scripture than many ordained men. Among them was that remarkable genius Thomas Walsh, the poet Olivers, the orator Bradburn; and, in later days, Benson, the commentator, and Adam Clarke, the universal scholar. Wesley himself was the pioneer and model of all educators, popular publishers, and philanthropists. What modern enterprise in the form of missionary, tract, Bible, benevolent, or temperance society has not derived some elements of its genesis from his example?

But the secret of all this power lay in the original aim of Methodism—which was indeed the primary object of Christianity, viz. the redemption of the individual man. Its keynote is found in St. Paul's dictum: 'If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature.' He who turns to Christ is bound henceforth to live for that which is highest. Whether he be a student at the university, a merchant in the city, a labourer in the fields, a miner in the dark earth-chamber, this law, requiring immediate consecration to life's best purpose, becomes imperative. If the man cannot read, he must learn. If he cannot utter his thoughts in ordered speech, so that he may give a reason for the hope that is in him, he is put into the way of acquiring this simple art. He must begin to teach in a Sunday school, to preach in kitchens and village chapels, or to be a visitor of the sick. He is immedi-

ately taught that the one indispensable condition of real elevation—the one secret by which he may prevail with God and men — is to become good and holy. During this century and a half how many thousands, who might never have heard a call to rise from degradation and despair, have received a summons to awake 'from nature's guilty sleep,' to seek mental improvement, moral strength, and true nobility before God and man! This call has been heard in every part of the earth.

Though Methodism is a standing barrier and witness against priesteraft, yet, from the first, it has taken its place as a monument to the value of discipline in the Church. It has not attempted to dispense with a separate ministry, or with the sacraments, because these are institutions of the Lord Himself. Providential necessity constrained Mr. Wesley to call his 'assistants' into the Conference, and to consign to them the management and care of his societies at his decease.[1] Out of them he selected a hundred to form the legal Conference. He did not formally give their ministerial position full recognition. But this was more out of economic and practical considerations than out of deference to any rigid ecclesiastical theory. He did not wish, if it were possible to avoid it, to make the breach between his people and the Established Church irreparable. It was not because he believed that ministers ordained by bishops could alone preach the gospel with saving power, or administer the sacraments with full efficacy. He held the validity of

[1] They bear the name of 'assistants' in the *Min. of Conf.* 1791, the year of Wesley's death; but in the *Min.* of 1792 they are called 'superintendents.'

presbyterian ordination, and exercised it himself in several cases.

The conviction of the importance of discipline has led to some serious struggles in our history. It was because the sense of ministerial responsibility had been strongly realized by our fathers—the preachers of Wesley's own time — that they could not be content so long as their people flocked to the altars of an unfriendly clergy. The same conviction, again, has determined them to resist attempts to communize the Church, and to reduce the ministers below the scriptural standards.[1] There is no space here to discuss the merits of the first, or of the subsequent divisions which have occurred in the century since the death of Wesley. We have no wish to analyse former misunderstandings or to appraise the judgments or acts of our predecessors on either side. We rejoice to have come upon better times. All the families of Methodism at this day confess their oneness. We are none of us certain that, for the present, the separate organizations do not accomplish a wider usefulness than one confederation could. But even these 'schisms' have helped to assimilate our experience with that of the early Church. There were 'divisions' then.[2] There were 'jealousy and strife.' Like them we have given proof that we are sometimes 'carnal' and 'walk after the manner of men.' That our progress has been interrupted and our influence checked by these divisions, no one can doubt; though we may believe that God will overrule them to His glory.

But this loyalty to the law of order, which has marked

[1] Beecham, *Constit. of Meth.*, p. 99, refers to *Min. of Conf.* 1768.
[2] 1 Cor. i. 10–12, iii. 3, 4; Jas. iv. 1, 2. Cf. also *Ep. Clem.*, i.–iii.

our connexional spirit and history, may also be observed as a characteristic of our idea of personal Christian life. We do not wear a garb like that which once distinguished a Methodist in the streets. We do not now separate men from women in the public services. The early preaching has ceased; we do not meet in 'Bands.' In the hurry of our age, with its frequent assemblies for moral or benevolent objects, and with its social, political, and literary activity, we do not see so many at week-night services, or at meetings for fellowship and prayer. But, by the grace of God, we still retain, in our class system, a security against the evils of a promiscuous Church membership. The older forms of the class meeting—which are not an essential part of this institution, intended to promote the 'communion of saints' and the highest spiritual advancement of every member—may be undergoing modification. We have no uniform standard with regard to the minimum of attendance which should be demanded. But the principle of a vital association with the fellowship of the Church, and of submission to a scriptural rule of life in the case of all who join us, we do not yield.[1]

If, also, there is any question of 'gifts,' we can in this matter humbly rejoice. We have not been favoured with a renewal of the miraculous powers which were so wonderful a part of the endowment bestowed upon the early Church. But in *charismata* of teaching, exhortation, administration, and evangelism, God has greatly favoured us. He who raised up John Wesley with his commanding

[1] Dr. Gregory makes some valuable 'suggestions' at the close of his *History of Christian Fellowship*, on this subject. He says: 'The mode of fellowship is not "sacred from revision," but I hope the fact of fellowship is.' See also Dr. Rigg's *Connexional Economy*, p. 186.

personal influence and untiring energy in labour; Charles Wesley to send out streams of Christian poetry which yet water richly our inheritance, as they refresh the universal Church; and John Fletcher to expound the way of the Lord more perfectly to our people, afterwards called out Hopper and Bradburn, Coke and Asbury. The modest learning of Joseph Benson, the legislative genius of Jabez Bunting, the intellectual breadth and stately eloquence of Richard Watson, secured an ample and generous development of our theology and ecclesiasticism. There are those still living who remember the serene countenance of Joseph Entwisle, 'fit index to his heavenly temper;' the penetrating intelligence and 'winning sweetness' of Richard Treffry, jun.; the saintly fervour of Bramwell, Smith and Stoner; the pulpit energy of Lessey and Newton.[1] We have not forgotten those who were all with us at the last Newcastle Conference, Dr. Waddy, L. H. Wiseman, G. T. Perks, S. Coley, Dr. Jobson, J. Rattenbury, Dr. Punshon, Dr. Smith, and W. O. Simpson. Every one of these names represents gifts of God to His creatures and to His Church of the highest import, and the value of which we do not seem to discern until they have been withdrawn. And, amongst the laity, how well gifts of wealth have been employed by such men as Thomas Farmer and Sir Francis Lycett! How well spiritual power has been exercised by such laymen as Benjamin Carvosso and William Dawson, and by such women as Mrs. Cryer, Mrs. Gibson, and Miss Lutton!

The numerical progress of Methodism, however, is

[1] Our missionary heroes should not be overlooked: such as Leigh, Squance, Lawry, Hunt, B. and W. Shaw, Gogerly, and many others.

possibly the phenomenon which some persons will regard as the most striking feature in its short history,—as the most perfect repetition of the early successes of Christianity.

Tacitus is our first external witness to the spread of Christianity.[1] He tells us that Nero, anxious to avoid the rumour that he had destroyed the city, charged it upon the Christians. He says that the leader of this sect had suffered capital punishment under Pontius Pilate; that this execrable superstition was for a time subdued by the death of its leader, but broke out again, not only in Judea (*origo ejus mali*), but in Rome, into which every abomination flowed. Several having confessed, led to others being arrested, and a great multitude (*multitudo ingens*) perished. These were convicted, not of the burning of the city, but of hatred to the human race (*odio humani generis*). They were covered with the skins of beasts, exposed in public shows, nailed to crosses, torn by dogs, or, when night came, their flaming bodies supplied the place of torches. The people pitied them, because they died, not for the public good, but through the cruelty of one man. Yet the historian blames them for their contumacy. In this scene of diabolical cruelty, it is believed that Peter and Paul lost their lives, as did many of the first members of the Church of Rome.

But, notwithstanding this baptism of fire and blood, the Church began again to flourish. Thirty years later, Pliny, governor of Bithynia, wrote to the emperor Trajan to ask 'what he should do with the Christians, for they abounded in every age, rank, and sex.[2] This contagious superstition

[1] *Annales*, xv., 44.

[2] Cf. Pliny, *Ep.*, x., 97. The Romans hoped by the destruction of Jeru-

had seized not only cities, but villages and mere hamlets. It had spread so rapidly that the temples began to be desolate, the solemnities to be disregarded, the supply of sacrifices to fall away.'[1] Fifty years later, Justin Martyr says: 'There is not a single race of men, whether barbarians or Greeks, or whatever they may be called, nomads, or vagrants, or herdsmen living in tents, among whom prayers and giving of thanks are not offered through the name of the crucified Jesus.'[2] As Pliny speaks of Asia Minor and Justin of Syria, so a little later Tertullian bears witness from Northern Africa. 'We are but of yesterday, but we have filled every place—cities, islands, forts, town councils, camps; we possess the masses, the decuriæ, the palace, the senate, the bar—the temples alone are left to Paganism.'[3] Again: 'Not only Parthians, Medes, and other eastern nations, but Africans, Moors, Gauls, even the British are subdued to Christ.'[4] The name of Christ was everywhere received.

In accounting for this success we do not question that the conditions necessary for it were in existence. But this

salem to humble the Jews everywhere. The grievance broke out in a new form in Christianity; yet now, the Romans clearly distinguished between Jews and Christians: see Gfrörer, *Ges. d. c. K.*, p. 253.

[1] Pliny says that he extorted much of his information from two servant girls who were called 'ministers:' 'Ex duabus ancillis quæ ministræ dicebantur.' From this it appears that females, some of whom were of the humbler class, 'handmaids,' were engaged in Christian work. Though the torturer did his worst, nothing could be elicited from them to justify accusation, and the governor could only brand their faith as 'a wicked and unseemly superstition:' 'Nihil aliud inveni, quam superstitionem pravam et immodicam.'

[2] *Dial. c. Tryph.*, c. 117. [3] *Apol.*, c. 37: 'Hesterni sumus,' etc.

[4] *Adv. Jud.*, c. 7: 'Brittanorum inaccessa Romanis loca, Christo vero subdita.'

Schaff (*Hist. of Ch.*, 1–100 A.D., p. 197) conjectures that in the fourth century the Christians formed one-tenth of the population of the Roman Empire. This is about the proportion of Methodists in England. In America they are yet more numerous.

does not lessen the marvel of Providence. Gibbon thought he could account for it by referring to the social condition of the Roman world, and to the peculiar qualities of the new religion.[1] The zeal of the new religionists, their austere morality, their assertion of supernatural power in miracles and in the fulfilment of prophecy, the promise of a future life, and the advantage of a strict discipline, made their success certain. Moreover, every one agrees with the philosophic historian, that 'Providence frequently condescends to use the passions of the human heart and the general circumstances of mankind as instruments to execute its purpose.'

Therefore we can reckon among the factors in the rapid extension of the Methodist form of Christianity, the zeal of its professors, their strict rule of life, the vividness of their faith, their solidarity of fellowship, and their singular but efficient organization with its universal discipline. In Wesley's days, also, the Churches were inactive, and there was no such competition in Christian aggression as that with which we are familiar. The Anglo-Saxon race had already commenced that colossal work of colonization, which has simultaneously extended the British Empire and the kingdom of Christ over the earth. But the national Church was too feeble to keep pace with emigration and political extension. A new system of religious life, with its fresh adaptations, had a suitability to the wants and ways of scattered settlers, backwoods-wanderers, and bush-rangers, which the older Churches could not exhibit. The growing freedom of states and peoples; the impulses of the Reformation—extending far beyond the inclinations of the lovers of ecclesiastical authority; the

[1] *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, c. xv. See also this Lect., p. 20.

decay of old-world governments and the failure of their policy; the freedom and development of the press; the collection of multitudes in manufacturing and commercial centres, for whom the Church could make no provision, have all afforded a grand opportunity for a system of evangelism, freed from the restraints of tradition, but baptized with the primitive spirit, and appealing to primitive and typical models. We are thankful that this splendid opportunity has been, to some extent at least, improved. Or, rather, we adore the great Head of the Church, who has employed such instrumentalities for the accomplishment of so great a work. 'What hath God wrought!' Without His supernatural aid and guidance these results would not have existed at all. We have but to look at the difficulties which lay in the path of progress to be convinced of this. How could a few people, without wealth, without institutions, without social position or power, withstood by prejudice of the most violent sort, by persecution often extending to the loss of all things, have undertaken a cosmopolitan labour like this, and have carried it to a successful issue?[1] But 'the little one has become a thousand, the small one a strong nation.' The society of 'eight or ten persons' which met in London in 1738 has expanded until it has gathered twenty-five millions of the race under its influence. In America it has become the largest Protestant Church, and commands the suffrages of the leading citizens. The wealth and culture of the United States are now contributing to its

[1] 'The Wesleyan Methodists are the only denomination which has retained the secret of primitive success.' (Rev. Mr. Ward, Serampore, quoted in Anderson's *Centenary Sermon.*) This is not so true now.

prosperity. Under separate Conferences in Canada,—where all Methodists now happily join,—in Australia with New Zealand and Polynesia, in South Africa and the West Indies, it numbers its followers by millions; and there is no nation under heaven among whom the messengers of this Church have not already gained some triumphs for the gospel.

But we do not assume that our mission is exhausted and the history closed. Problems as solemn as those which met the gaze of our fathers yet await solution. The lost thousands of our towns and cities—degraded by a false civilization, trampled down by the fierce competitions of commercial life, victimized by intemperance, by popular infidelity, and by the evil example of their superiors—need immediate help. Myriads of the heathen, whose necessities a century of missionary experience has revealed, and whose religious systems our testimony has destroyed, wait for clearer light, for Christian education, for social elevation. The higher classes of our own nation, who are in such danger from fanaticism, from social reaction, and from the Romeward tendencies in the national Church, demand the prayerful attention of all evangelical Christians. The scepticism of France and Germany, the religious degeneracy of Spain and Italy,—as of all Roman Catholic countries,—and the stubborn resistance of the entire Mohammedan world to Christ, present fields for spiritual enterprise so vast that only the enthusiasm of faith can dare to look upon them.

Within the sphere of our own Church life we have many occasions of solicitude. How can we discharge the full responsibilities of the pastorate, with its demands for higher

instruction and personal supervision of the multitude that have followed us out of Egypt, and yet carry on the unceasing evangelism that the state of the world without demands? At first, Methodism was a 'society' within a Church,—depending upon that Church at many points of its spiritual and ecclesiastical constitution. But now we stand apart, as a Church with its own institutions; and more may be needed to adjust terms of membership which were suitable enough to a 'society,' but may require adaptation now that we are a fully separate Church. Especially do we need to learn what is the true 'relation of baptized children' to the Church which has received them; and how we may obtain the sympathy, cohesion, and co-operation of our educated young people, lest they should be betrayed into the forsaking of Christ. On the other hand, there are to be met the aspirations of those who desire 'to go on to perfection.' Sometimes these are impatient with the lower standard of devotion above which many members of the Church seem to be incapable of rising.

But the chief lesson which we have to learn from the triumph of the past is how we may conquer again. We do learn from this incontestable evidence that the old power of the gospel remains. Eighteen centuries after Pentecost, our fathers and we are witnesses that 'the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins,' and that 'the residue of the Spirit' is with Him. There are those who doubt whether this work be of God or whether it be of man. Like Bishop Gibson, they cannot see that 'any great work of God has been going on.' One great triumph of Methodism is, that its methods of doing good are now adopted by all Churches. The successors of those who

persecuted Wesley for preaching out of doors, for holding services in unconsecrated places, for teaching the doctrine of conscious conversion, and of the 'highest life,' now do these very things as earnestly, if not more earnestly, than ourselves. But they still allege that it is not 'lawful' for us to do them. They yet denounce us as 'schismatics.'[1] They still declare that 'Dissent is sin.'[2] That which we believe to be the work of God, some will seek to destroy as the work of Satan. Only, our history assures us that such opposition, however crafty or powerful, cannot overthrow us so long as we are doing the work of the Lord. When we cease to attend to that, it will be time for us to come to nought. If this 'wild olive' has been 'grafted into a good olive tree,' it takes its place among the branches. With them it has become 'partaker of the fatness of the root of the olive tree.' We glory not over the other branches. But we do not mourn because we are not grafted in to any of them. The life is not in the branch, but in the root. 'If the root is holy, so are the branches.' But we 'rejoice with trembling.' To us it is said: 'Be not high-minded, but fear . . . Behold the severity and goodness of God . . . Thou standest by faith.'

It may be said, perhaps, that in this lecture we have been exalting our sect, and with much conceit and narrowness. We shall be reminded that ours is but, after all, a portion,—a small portion of the professing Church. To this

[1] 'Those who live according to the Word are Christians even though they have been thought atheists, as among the Greeks, Socrates and Herodotus, and Abraham and Elias among barbarians.' (Just. Mart. *Apol.*, i., 146.)

[2] On the Sunday evening after the delivery of this lecture, the Vicar of Newcastle, the Rev. Canon Lloyd, in St. Nicholas' Church, spoke of Dissenters as the successors of Jeroboam, 'who made Israel to sin.'

we can but plead in reply that we all have a right to the occasional statement of our views. Evangelical Christians will generally feel that really our cause is theirs, and that any defence we can put forth for ourselves, may, to some extent, advantage them. For they all are occasionally liable to the reproach of being 'Methodists.' And our adversaries may not be the worse for being told what our views upon the main points, which divide us from them, really are.

But we are sometimes reminded that we bear the name of a sect,—'Methodists;' and even the name of a man, as 'Wesleyans.' If Paul and Apollos and Cephas were but ministers by whom the Corinthians believed, and these apostles refused to allow converts to be baptized in their name, can we consistently allow ourselves to be called by a party name?

We answer that the name 'Methodist' did not originate with us.[1] It was first given in contempt, as was probably the title 'Christian.' 'No name of a crime stands against us, but only the crime of a name.'[2] We retain it as a convenient designation. Providence has permitted this name to fasten upon us lest we should choose one for ourselves. And is it not better to have this name and its reproach rather than some designation which we could not fairly claim, or which, if we claimed it, might cast an implicit reproach upon other Christians? As it is, no one envies us. Let us therefore be content to be known in the world by the name men have chosen for us. Except for the

[1] Dr. Blunt (*Dict. of Heresies*, p. 313) says 'it was first appropriated to Wesley and his friends as a piece of Oxford undergraduate banter in the year 1728.'

[2] Tert. *Ad Nat.*, c. iii.

purpose of denomination, a name is, like an idol, 'nothing in the world.' Only when we find that our name has impinged upon the glory of Christ should we resolve to forego it. No Methodist on earth sings hymns to John Wesley. We have no shrines in our churches for patron saints: no inferior cultus has its votaries outnumbering the worshippers of the Son of God. We sing, from Japan to California, from Labrador to Fiji—

> 'JESUS, the NAME high over all
> In hell or earth or sky.'

We say, in the most solemn moments of existence—

> 'Lo, from sin and grief and shame
> I hide me, JESUS, in Thy Name.'

Our religion is Christianity, or it is nothing; but we do not call ourselves the 'Church' or 'Christians,' lest we should exclude, even by implication, those who 'are not of this fold' from the 'flock.' No name that men give or refuse can disguise the fact that Christ's Name is upon us. 'One is' our 'Master, the Christ,' and 'all' we 'are brethren.' We are 'Catholics,' for we pray that 'grace may be on all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.' We are 'Protestants,' for we deny that there is any authority in Christ's Church higher than His word. We are 'Methodists,' for we desire to be—

> 'THE FRIENDS OF ALL,
> THE ENEMIES OF NONE.'

INDEX

TO AUTHORS AND SUBJECTS.

Abbey and Overton, 71, 146.
Alford, Dean, 102, 114.
Apocryphal writings, 11, 71.
Apostles, Twelve, 24.
Apostolical Canons, etc., 51, 70, 72–74, 92, 119.
Apostolical Succession, 27, 52, 58, 71, 84, 123, 124, 125.
Apostolicity, 66.
Arminianism, 34, 35.
Arnobius, 13.
Arnold, Dr. T., 46.
Augustine, Bp. of Hippo, 13, 40, 74, 100.
Austen, Rev. S. C., 86.

Baptismal Regeneration, 40.
Barnabas, 28, 43, 97, 132.
Barrett, Rev. A., 108.
Baur, Dr. F. C., 48, 133.
Beda, 134.
Beecham, Dr., 26, 150.
Beet, Rev. J. A., 42.
Bengel, 30, 33, 75, 79 114.
Bennett, Dr., 62, 99.
Beveridge, Bp., 70–73, 92.
Beza, 28.
Blunt, Dr., 54, 160.
Boehmer, 26.
Browne, Bp. Har., 40, 83, 94, 126.
Buddæus, J. F., 93.
Bullinger, 140.
Burton, Dr., 129.
Butler, Bp., 30.

Calvinism, 32.
Catholicity, 82, 109, 110, 161.
Cave, Dr. W., 70, 73.
Cerinthus, 64.
Charismata, 28, 77.
Christ, Person of, 23.
Christianity, increase of, 153.
,, and evolution, 20.
Christians, early, poverty of, 12, 145.
Christian Library, 121.
Chrysostom, 112.
Church, nature of, 17, 81.
,, diversity in, 110–112.
Class-leaders, 50, 56.
Clement of Alexandria, 70, 137.
Clement of Rome, 12, 28, 51, 112, 114, 115, 123–127, 151.
Clementines, the, 122, 124.
Confessional, the, 53–56.
Conversion, doctrine of, 40.
Conybeare and Howson, 11, 26.
Cornelius, 103.
Cremer, *Lexicon*, 42, 105.
Cross, the, 64, 65, 97.
Curteis, Dr., 15, 31, 111, 135.
Cyprian, 52, 82, 100, 117–119, 120.

Daillé, 11, 53, 72, 92, 130.
Dale, Dr. R. W., 40, 66, 102, 138.
Deacons, 26, 28, 115.
Dissent, sin of, 159.
Docetism, 64.
Dodwell, Dr. H., 80.
Dollinger, Dr., 33.

Donaldson, Dr. J., 70, 120, 135.
Dorner, Dr. J. A., 22, 37.
Douglas, Dr. G., 39.
Düsterdieck, F., 93.

Ebionitism, 48, 64.
Ecclesiastical history, 121.
Edersheim, Dr., 18.
Elders, 51, 114, 115, 126.
Ellicott, Bp., 33.
Epiphanius, 76.
Episcopacy, 71, 76, 92, 93, 111, 139.
Erasmus, 15.
Eucharist, the, 117, 125, 139.
Eusebius, 12, 13, 26, 44, 76, 106.

Farrar, Dr. F. W., 47, 52, 93, 103, 106, 110.
Fathers, the, 32, 58, 100, 121.
Fellowship, 9, 78.
Fletcher, Rev. J., 34, 40, 41.
Freedom, spiritual, 49, 68, 95.

Gentile Christians, 103, 104, 114.
Gfrörer, A. F., 46, 52, 154.
Gibbon, 20, 155.
Gibson, Bp., 59, 89.
Gieseler, 26, 71, 106.
Gnostics, the, 64, 134.
Goodwin, Dr. J., 30.
Gore, Rev. O., 84, 92.
Gould, Rev. S. B., 11.
Grace, sacramental, 96.
Green's History, 94.
Gregory, Rev. Dr. B., 9, 25, 56, 78, 80, 82, 108, 151.
Gregory, Rev. J. R., 73.
Gurney, Rev. A., 86.

Hare, Rev. A., 59.
Harnack, 120.
Hatch, Prof., 20, 27, 29, 68, 92, 102, 137.
Hausrath, 134.
Hayman, Dr., 92.
Hegesippus, 47, 48, 102, 122.
Hermas, 43, 51, 115.
Herzog, 93, 108.
Hilary, 46, 49.
Hippolytus, 76.
Hook, Dr. W. F., 69, 73, 83.
Hooker, 108.
Houses, churches in, 113, 114.
Huther, Dr. J. E., 42, 114.

Ignatius, 12, 26, 51, 65, 82, 102, 106, 115, 127, 129.
Irenæus, 18, 61, 115.
Itinerancy, 51.

Jackson, Rev. T., 36, 69, 95, 145.
Jacob, Dr., 111.
Jerome, 65.
Jerusalem, church of, 122.
,, destruction of, 52, 122.
Jewish Christians, the, 122, 123.
,, and heresy, 64, 123.
Josephus, 29, 42.
Jowett, Rev. Dr., 13.
Judaism, 23, 47, 97.
Justification by faith, 34, 35.
Justin Martyr, 26, 43, 65, 115, 132, 137, 154.
Juvenal, 103.

Kahnis, K. A., 46, 60, 63, 87, 122.
Killen, Dr., 130.
King, Lord, 77.

Lactantius, 9.
Law, Rev. W., 54, 144.
Lay preachers, 52, 53.
Lechler, Dr., 22, 26, 28, 47, 52, 78, 113, 133.
Liddon, Dr., 15, 68, 84, 136.
Lightfoot, Bp., 26, 64, 68, 93, 102, 111, 124, 127, 130, 138.
Literature, loss of early, 12.
Littledale, Dr., 15, 71.
Love-feast, the, 78, 79, 116, 125, 139.
Luther, Dr. M., 49.

Macdonald, Rev. F. W., 31.

Manning, Card., 99.
Marcion, 64.
Mellor, Dr., 54.
Methodism, a church, 69, 158.
,, discipline of, 141, 149.
,, divisions of, 137, 150.
,, future of, 157.
,, in America, 145, 156.
,, its fellowship, 151.
results of, 95, 155.
social position of, 145.
Methodist, name, 30, 107, 160.
Methodists, at Oxford, 30.
catholicity of, 101, 161.
,, doctrine of, 32, 33.
,, in the church, 99.
Meyer, Dr. H. A. W., 10, 42, 79, 102, 105.
Middleton, Dr. Conyers, 11.
Ministry, the Christian, 150.
Moberly, Bp., 85.
Mohler, J. A., 80.
Montanism, 49, 60, 75, 76, 134.
Moravianism, 32.
Mosheim, 75.
Muratori, Canon of, 105, 115.

Name, Christian, 105.
Neander, 52, 75, 110.
Newman, Card., 9, 41, 58, 70, 81, 99.
Nirschl, Dr. J., 57, 71, 124.

Order, Church, 126.
Ordination, 27, 28, 90.
Origen, 82, 100.
Osborn, Dr. G., 62.

Paley, Dr., 79.
Palmer, Dr. W., 66.
Paul, St., ordination of, 27, 91.
Paulinism, 65.
Pearson, Bp., 73, 81, 88, 130.
Pfleiderer, Dr., 44, 52, 63, 135.
Pliny, 29, 114, 153, 154.
Plumptre, Dr., 79.
Pope, Dr., 18, 21, 2 40, 86, 87, 106, 108, 127.
Potter, Bp., 59, 81.
Powell, Rev. T., 68.
Pressensé, Dr. E., 77.
Priesthood, 51, 52, 113, 117, 126.
Pusey, Dr., 15, 58, 69, 71.

Quakers, the, 60.

Renan, 29, 52.
Review, Quart., 36, 145.
,, *Lond Quart.*, 61, 85.
Rigg, Rev. Dr., 31, 139, 151.
Ritschl, A., 26, 28, 29, 47, 52, 103 124, 135.
Rothe, Prof., 25, 28, 52, 93, 129.

Sacerdotalism, 55, 71, 114.
Sacraments, 84, 85.
Schaff, Dr., 12, 26, 58, 114, 124, 143, 154.
Schwegler, Dr. A., 19, 48, 123, 133.
Simcox, Rev. W. H., 93.
Simon Magus, 91.
Smeaton, Prof., 87.
Smith's *Dict. of Christ. Antiq.*, 129.
,, ,, *Biog.*, 12, 13, 102, 115, 119, 124.
Spirit, the Holy, 60, 62, 81, 85, 86, 92, 96, 98.
Spirit, the Holy, gifts of, 89, 98.
,, ,, witness of, 35.
Stanley, Dean, 22, 26.
Stevens' *Hist. of Meth.*, 34, 37, 146.
Stone, Rev. J. K., 107.
Suetonius, 29.

Tacitus, 29, 103, 106, 153.
Taylor, Isaac, 46, 141.
,, Bp., 81.
Teaching of Twelve Apostles, 12, 28, 51, 73, 138.
Temple, old and new, 21.
Tertullian, 11, 39, 51, 67, 76, 100, 106, 111, 116, 137, 154, 160.
Theology, Christian, 22.
,, Methodist, 36, 37, 38.

Tractarians, 15.
Transubstantiation, 85, 86.
Tübingen School, 14, 48, 115, 123, 134.
Tyerman, Rev. L., 86, 121, 128.
Unity of Church, 102–140.
,, visible, 106.
Urlin, Mr., 77.
Usteri, L., 60.

Valentinus, 29.
Vitringa, 29.

Warburton, Bp., 62, 77.
Ward, Dr., 96.
Wedgwood, Miss, 31.
Weiss, Dr., 42, 60.
Wesley, Rev. C., 23, 81, 152.
,, Rev. J., 23, 31, 32, 35, 46, 57, 59, 66, 70, 74, 77, 80, 121, 149.
Westcott, Dr., 12, 42, 73, 93, 106, 123, 131, 132.
Whiston, Rev. W., 74.
Whitefield, Rev. G., 41.
Wordsworth, Bp. C., 25, 73, 78, 106.
Wordsworth, Bp. St. And., 122.

Young, Rev. Dr., 35, 62.

Zahn, Theod., 115, 127, 129.

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